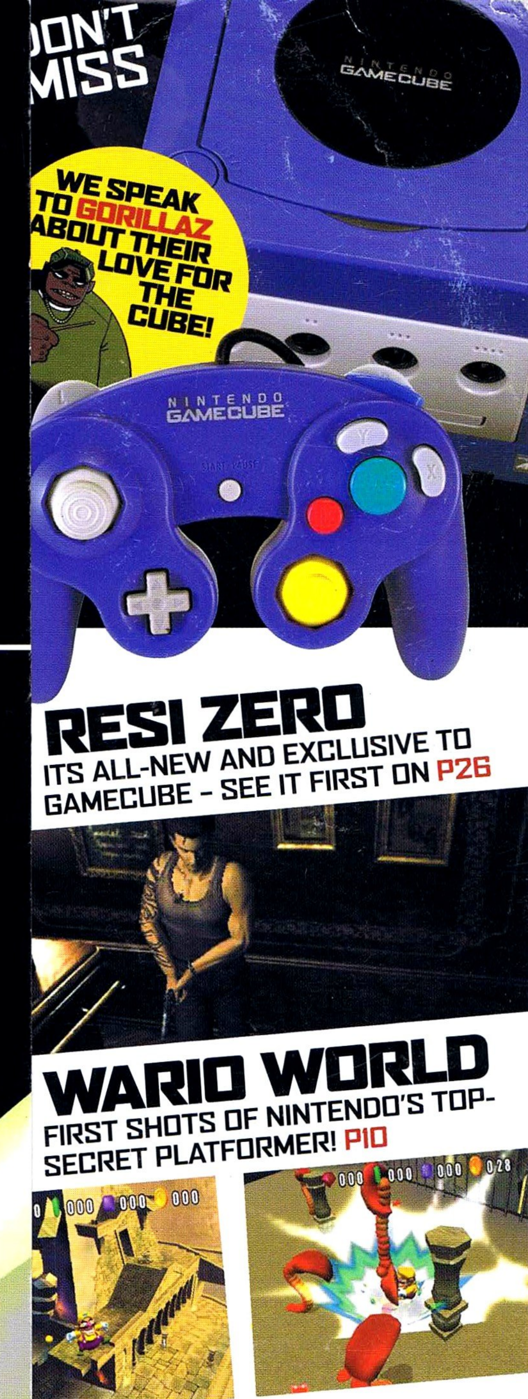
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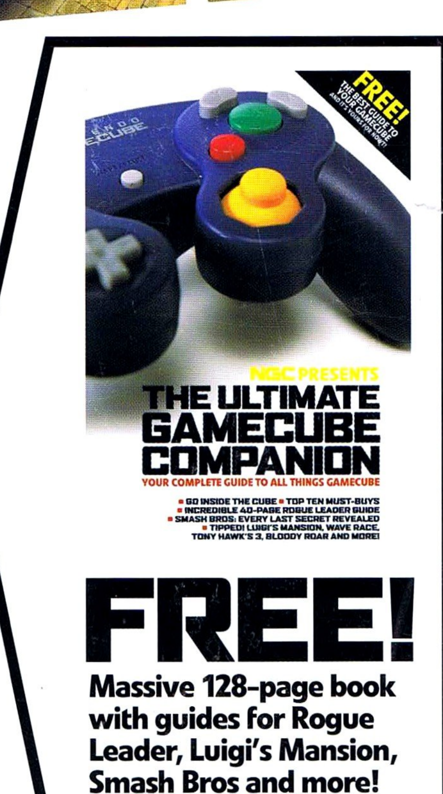
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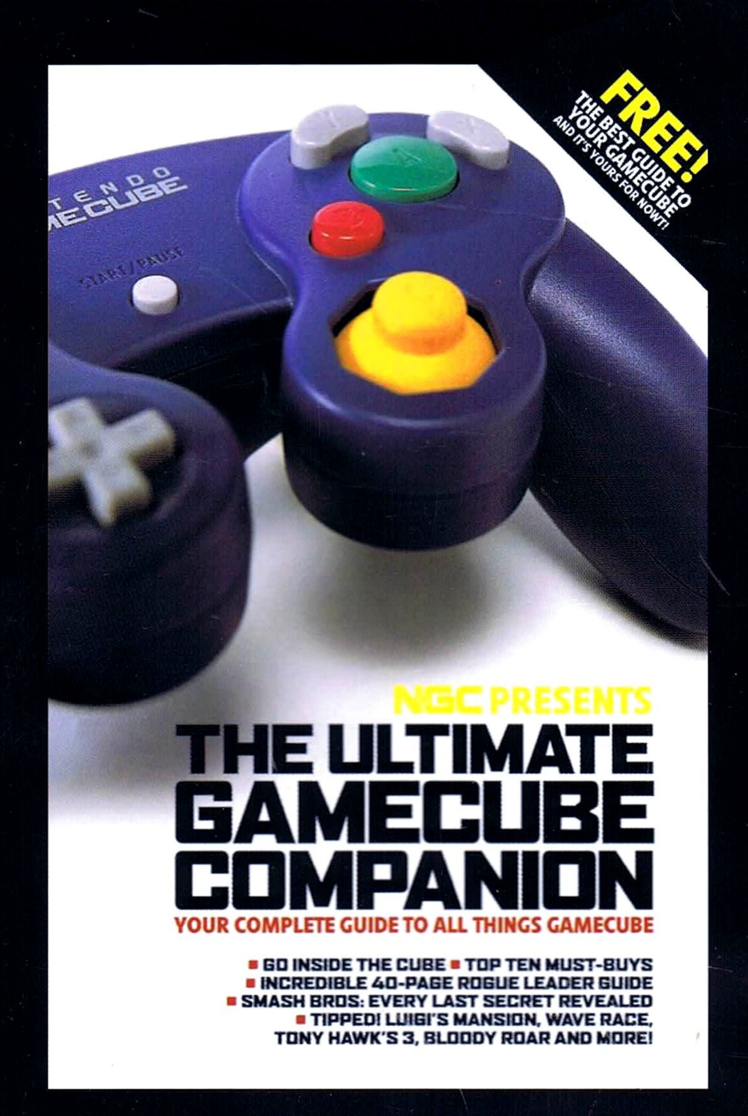
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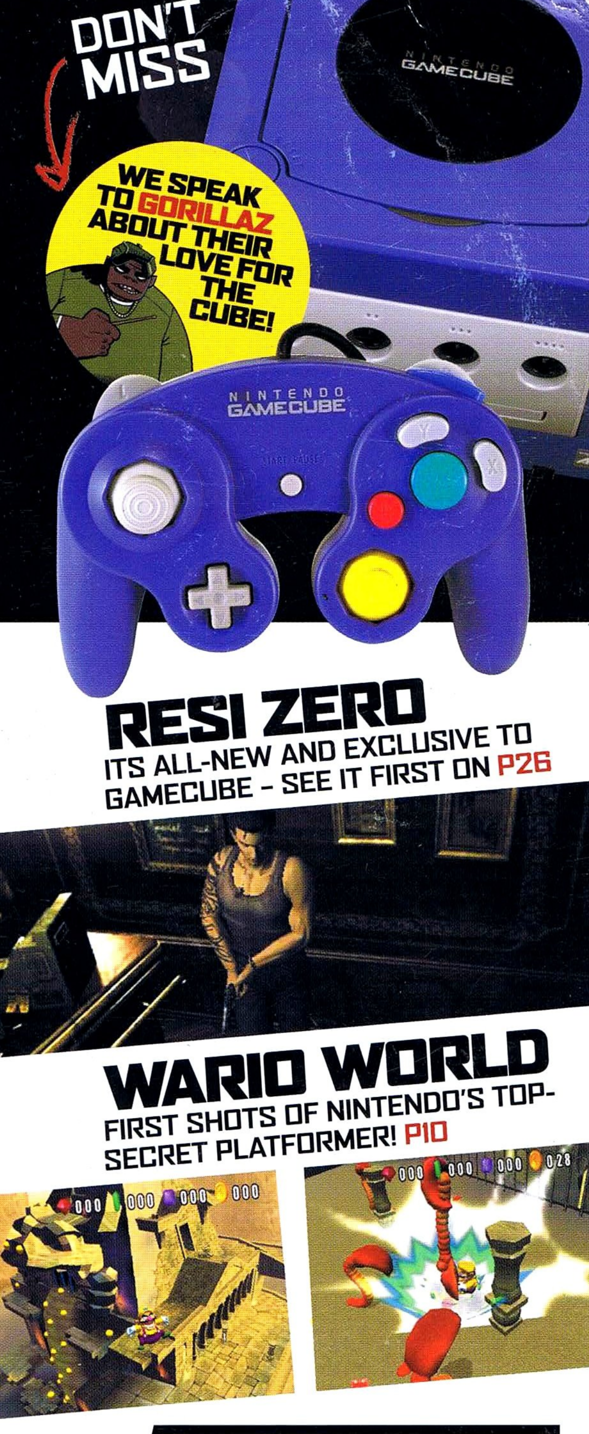
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MARIO SUNSHINE

HANDS-ON PLAY!

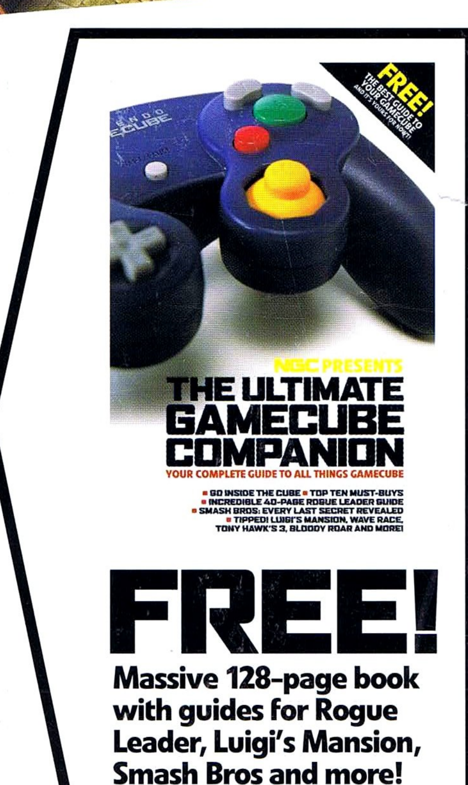
Super-sequel torn to bits – it's all inside!

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The Legend of Zelda
Wario World
Metroid Prime
Resident Evil Zero
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Monkey Ball 2
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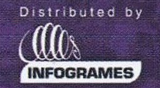
LIKE THE LOOK OF THESE? GET MORE ZELDA ON PAGE 6 NOW!

CAN'T GET ENOUGH MARIO?

See him in Mario Party 4 on Gamecube and Yoshi's Island on GBA!



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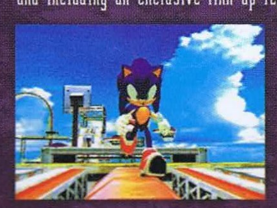


CREATED BY SONIC TEAM SEGA

Come all ye Faithful.

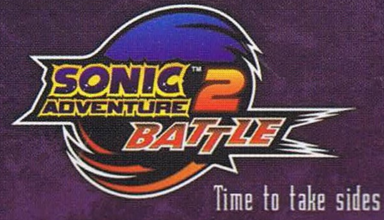
The mighty armies of light and dark have gathered. The future of a fragile world hangs in the balance.
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Time to take sides



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E IS FOR EXCITE

If you're not familiar with the term 'E3', then let me spend a couple of seconds filling you in on the details: E3 is the Electronics Entertainment Expo, it's held once a year in Los Angeles, and it's the biggest videogames show on Earth. Every developer and publisher worth their salt uses E3 as an opportunity to showcase their latest, greatest inventions – and Nintendo are no different. This year they promised *Legend of Zelda, Mario Sunshine, 1080° 2, Starfox Adventures, Metroid Prime, Mario Party 4* and the previously unheard of *Wario World* – and they didn't fail to deliver. We sent Geraint over to play every last Gamecube game, and you'll be able to read real verdicts from the show floor on all of Nintendo's games – plus the best of the rest, including *Resident Evil 0, Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, Monkey Ball 2* and *Star Wars: Bounty Hunter.*

FIRST AND BEST

The real bonus for you this year is that our deadline was slap bang on E3, meaning we could bring you ALL the screenshots, ALL the info, and ALL the secrets before anyone else. And we're still delivering the very best writing too, using the very best sources: have a look at our preview of *Resident Evil 0* on page 26 to see what we mean. That game is more hush-hush than Jud's gun club meetings, but we still managed to wring every last drop of secret stuff out of it, including important impressions on how it plays.

LIFE REALLY IS A GAME

Our E3 special starts on page six and lasts for 41 pages. *41 pages*! If this year's E3 was an indication of anything it's that Gamecube is taking the world by storm. We've seen and played more games during this month than we saw and played during the entire time N64 was out and about. The response to Nintendo's new machine is phenomenal – we're getting the big sequels now, the big franchises, but we're also the only console that's also getting *Zelda* and *Mario.* Fantastic, isn't it?

Tim Weaver Editor
ngc@futurenet.co.uk

NGC HANDS-ON AT E3

IF YOU SEE THIS LOGO, YOU KNOW WE'VE PLAYED IT AT THIS YEAR'S E3!

TURN TO PAGE 114...
...to see what Gorillaz make of the Gamecube

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
Turn to page 104 and make sure you never miss an issue of **NGC**! G'won!

TURN OVER THE PAGE!
For five of the choicest cuts from this month's previews-packed ***NGC!***



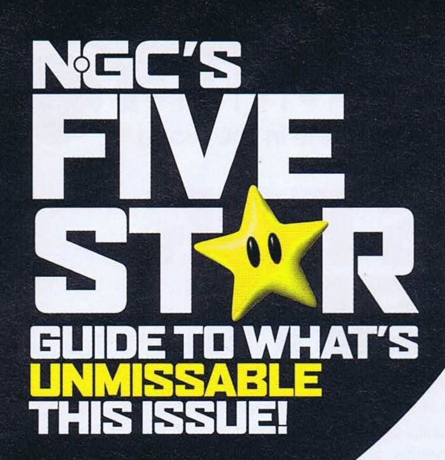
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THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

Cel of the century! Amazing new info and shots – in your *face*!





MARIO SUNSHINE

Mario gets wet 'n' wild in the *Mario 64* sequel – and it's looking incredible…





MEET ENJiKi

She's probably the best-looking girl we've ever met. Apart from Kylie. Though we never technically 'met' her. Well, we met her on our monitor. Er, anyway, Enjiki's here to guide you through the beautiful new **NGC**. *Ah, Enjiki. How you tease us with your… er… eyes.*





THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

PAGE 6



THE BEST OF ELF!

Zelda's here and it's hot stuff. We elbowed through the stinky crowds to play it at E3…









RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

Train of brains! The amazing prequel clawed to sticky pieces at E3…

PIKMIN

Six-page review! Shigsy's hatstand vegetable RTS gets kicked around the garden.

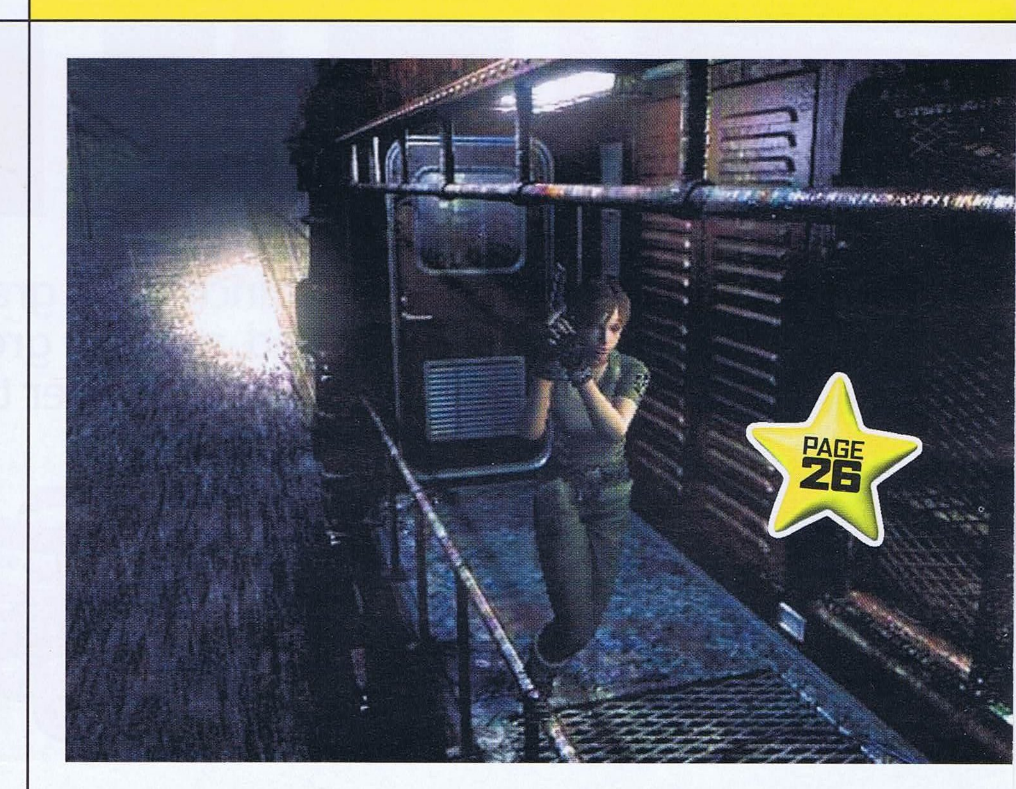
WARIO WORLD

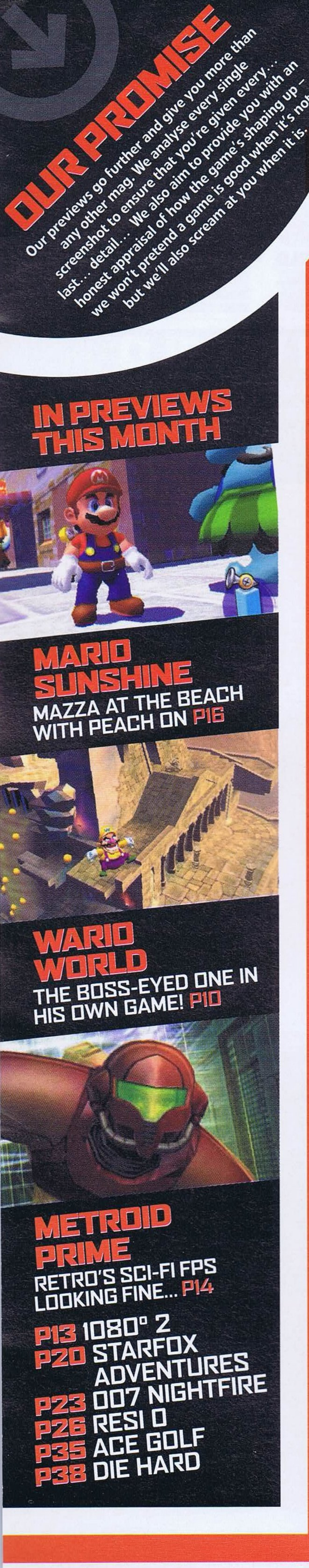
Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa! Get ready for pain-filled platforming mayhem as Wazza gets his first proper game…











ALL NEW ZELDA!

Over the coming months we'll bring you the latest screens, info and interviews straight from Nintendo in Japan. Read it first in NGC.

△ Link's brand-new mode of transport is a Chinese-style dragon boat. It can leap above the water to collect floating rupees as it sails from island to island.

THE LEGEND

The most incredible graphics ever devised, and the greatest legend ever told…



hen a game series with a strong story and mythology runs for as many sequels as *Zelda* has seen over the years, the authors will eventually exhaust their supply of potential plots.

That's why, like *Majora's Mask*, the latest *Legend of Zelda* is another step away from Link's Ganon-battling, princess-saving heritage, with another brand-new world for the pointy-eared adventurer to explore.

In the concisely titled *Legend of Zelda* for Gamecube, young Link and his sister are living a peaceful existence on a remote desert island when a strange multicoloured bird swoops out of the sky and snatches the girl. Being a heroic sort of guy, Link finds himself a boat and sets off in search of his abducted sibling.

Nintendo's sprawling E3 stand had stacks of demo machines running *Legend of Zelda*, and the heaving throng of sweaty men jostling to get their hands on the controllers demonstrated that not only was it by far the biggest attraction of the show, but also that many of the people who complained about 'Kiddie Link' and the cel-shaded graphics are now shame-facedly eating their words.

Because the game looks almost too good to be true. The animation is more detailed and vibrant than



△ Break out the telescope on the X-button and you can see all the way to that spooky castle in the background. Could that be where Link's sister is held?



△ The special effects are terrific, and always entirely in keeping with the game's strikingly coloured cartoon visuals. Nothing else looks quite like *Legend of Zelda*.

OF ZELDA

PUSH IT

Link's only a little fella but he's more than tough enough to haul huge stone blocks and push giant weights into holes. When things fall into place you'll hear the familiar *Zelda* chimes – music to the ears of any Nintendo fan.

anything we've ever seen – so much so that lumping it with other cel-shaded games seems rather unfair.

Link's whole world is like a living, breathing cartoon. There's detailed movement in every minor object in the game, from the way the grass sways in the breeze to the subtle elasticity of anything that moves suddenly – doors that wobble a little when they get slammed, for example.

There are some blindingly good wave effects for things like water and lava – a bizarrely hypnotic rolling motion that's as difficult to describe as it is to tear your eyes away from.

The animation on the actual characters is jaw-dropping – there's so much personality in everyone Link encounters, with even commonplace enemies capable of incredible facial expressions and body language.

Despite the apparent simplicity of the game's colouring (everything is shaded with a light half, a dark half and a transitional colour in between), it looks remarkably solid. Check out the images on these pages and you'll get an idea of how the lighting and shadows work to make a convincing 3D effect. The entire thing looks as good as a top-of-the-range Disney production – in terms of imagination and innovation it's leagues ahead of anything around right now. The E3 version features five main areas, which we'll break down for you here:

> **"THE ANIMATION IS MORE DETAILED AND VIBRANT THAN ANYTHING WE'VE EVER SEEN"**

First up is Island of Beginning, a typical *Zelda* level with grass to cut down and wandering townsfolk. An old man teaches Link how to fight, patiently explaining all the various slash types (which are the same as in the N64 games). There are several mini-quests to complete, including one where you have to catch a greasy pig, Hillbilly Olympics style.

Vast Ocean is a minigame which is accessed by paying the boat owner. The aim is to collect treasure dotted around the ocean course. Smaller rupees can be collected by sailing over them, and by holding R the boat can be made to hop into the air to collect the larger ones found above barrels.

Next up is Dragon Mountain, a dungeon level

"By pressing against ledges, Link can shuffle along walls"

HEART METER

As in the previous games in the series, collecting four quarters of a heart container adds a whole heart to Link's life gauge. Potions can be assigned to the X and Y buttons to recover life during a battle or whenever it's needed.

GRAPPLING HOOK

This is a new one for Link. It replaces the old hookshot, at least in the early stages that we've seen, and is used for swinging across gaps or grabbing hold of ledges as a last resort to prevent Link falling to his death.

TELESCOPE

Scope out distant locations or just get a better look at Link's surroundings with this useful new piece of seafaring equipment. Works in dungeons, too.

DUNGEON KEYS

It wouldn't be Zelda without treasure chests and keys. The dungeon shown in these shots had been unlocked by Nintendo's coders so they could wander freely to take pictures, which is why they all show the same number of keys and rupees.

SHOULDER BUTTON

Like the B-button, the right shoulder button is totally context sensitive. Right now it's being used to bring up the shield, but at other times you can use it to crouch, drop items, or raise your sails to make the Dragon Boat leap into the air.

with unlockable chests, traditional *Zelda* puzzles such as lighting torches with a flaming stick, and a new sidling move borrowed from *Metal Gear Solid*. By pressing against the wall, Link can avoid detection and shuffle across narrow ledges.

Island of the Magic Beast features even more *MGS*/Gerudo Fortress stealth antics. Link has to sneak past loads of guards by hiding under a barrel and creeping forwards when their backs are turned. To increase the tension, searchlights sweep across the area, but Link can destroy them to make progress a little easier.

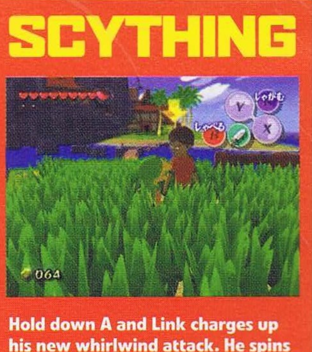
Getting caught means a trip to prison, with a network of tunnels to navigate before returning to the main level.

Finally there's the Boss Battle area, which is amazing to look at at. The boss is a giant insectoid beast with a weak point in its eye, rather like Gohma, the first boss from *Ocarina of Time*. Hitting it makes its head drop down so Link can swipe it in the eye – it's also possible to use the grappling hook to climb to a gantry above and bring parts of the ceiling crashing down on the creature's head. The animation in this scene is among the best in the entire demo version, with fiery lighting and a constant heat haze adding to the atmosphere. Unquestionably the single most impressive thing at E3.

As you've probably gathered, the increased emphasis on stealth in certain levels is the only really big change to the basic mechanics of the N64 games, but all the controls have been refined and work more intuitively than before. The much-imitated lock-on targeting is still there on the left shoulder button. Clicking it all the way down cycles between multiple opponents, which is simpler than the old targeting method.

The C-stick is used to move the camera, and once you've set it to a

SCYTHING



Hold down A and Link charges up his new whirlwind attack. He spins all over the place for a few seconds, decimating anything nearby. When he's done his eyes roll and he gasps for breath. Cute!



△ Check out the pool of two-tone light cast by Link's burning stick.



△ The heat-haze and lighting in this area made grown men swoon at E3.



△ The wide-eyed look of horror signifies the loss of Link's last bit of life…



△ Smashing a pot can reveal a hidden treasure, but is unlikely to impress this pot-carrying young lady.



△ Our first glimpse of New Link from Spaceworld 2001. The on-screen status displays have changed since this preview.

certain position it will keep the same angle, even during a fight. Much better than having to keep tapping Z to re-centre the camera on the N64.

Both the B and R buttons are now context-sensitive, and with A used as the main action button, only X and Y can be used to activate items (you could have three items assigned to the C-buttons in the N64 games). It wasn't a problem in any of the E3 levels but it might mean more digging around in the menu screens later on.

Link can now pick up weapons from defeated enemies, so he has the option to use the large pikes and axes carried by certain guards. These bonus weapons will eventually break, but they're very useful – particularly if you find something like a wooden staff, which can be used like a Deku stick to light torches.

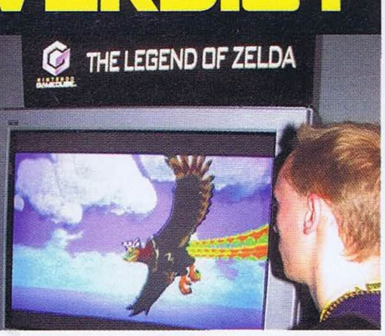
It's simply an incredible game – essentially an expansion of the N64 versions with the most beautiful graphics ever created. Hopefully we won't have to wait too long before we see it (even though it's already been delayed from November to February). It will surely slip further, but the E3 version is in English, so at least the translation appears to be in place. Fingers crossed…

"UNQUESTIONABLY THE SINGLE MOST IMPRESSIVE THING AT E3. THE BEST GAME OF THE SHOW."

QUESTS
The E3 version's areas were accessed via a central menu, so we've no idea how the actual game will be structured. At a guess, we'd say it's divided into islands.

NGC VERDICT

Amazing. Simply amazing. And did we say it was amazing? The only downside is that the gameplay hasn't evolved *that* much since the N64, but one thing we did notice after countless visits to the Nintendo stand was that there's a GBA link-up feature that enables a two-player co-op mode. It seemed to be in a very early state and was entirely in Japanese, running on a single machine tucked away at the back of the stand, but it's definitely in there at the moment and will probably be expanded in the finished version. As it stands, the GBA shows an enhanced version of Link's radar, and the second player can move a target around and help out by confusing enemies or collecting items. It's like having a human-controlled Navi-style fairy. Weird.



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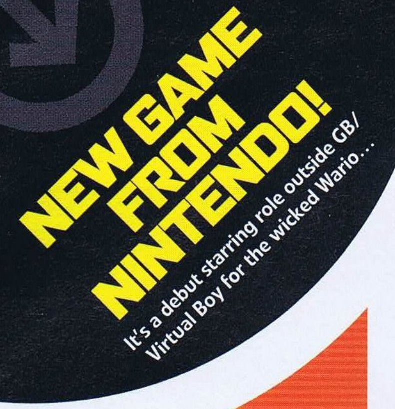
WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- Epona. Link's horse wasn't in the E3 demo version but we'll wager she can be found somewhere later on in the game.
- Some kind of new function for the ocarina or whatever new instrument the musical Link plays.
- References to previous games. It would be great to see Ganondorf drawn in the new visual style.

ANTICIPATION RATING









THE KNOWLEDGE

- It's-a him, Wario, with a platform adventure set in his very own basement.
- Themed levels see Wario transported to strange worlds.
- Other places you might spot a nose like Wario's: On a wino outside your local Iceland; on that old geezer who props up the bar at the pub, seven days a week; on the TV show The Royle Family. Award yourself a pat on the back for each one you see!

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Wario Land: Mario Land 3 (NGC/41)**
  Wazza's debut as leading man in a classic Game Boy threequel.
- **Wario Land 4 (NGC/62)**
  The porky superstar's fourth starring role, this time on GBA.

△ Sections like this work in a 2D-platformer sort of way, but there are plenty of larger, wide open areas to explore.

△ The yellow balls down the left-hand side are sticky, allowing Wario to grab hold of them in a slightly pervy manner.

WARIO WORLD

With a cackling laugh and a nose like a rotten, lager-soaked strawberry, the Anti-Mario arrives on Gamecube.



Well, we didn't see this one coming. Then again, after doing such a marvellous job on Game Boy over the years, it's only right Wario's brand of platform action should find a bigger stage.

Wario World is billed as a side-scrolling platformer, though it's definitely nothing like the forced-perspective dullness of *Kirby 64*. In fact it's not really like any 2D platformer, since it throws elements of wrestling into the mix, and features large 3D stages to show off Wario's fat-man moves.

As per usual, Wario's aim is to venture into the kind of hazardous places his nemesis Mario fears to tread. These places are stashed with valuable treasure, and there's nothing Wario values more than cold hard cash. Bet he wishes he'd won that mansion instead of Luigi.

In *Wario World*, the poor guy's castle basement has been turned into a parallel dimension, and all his treasure has been turned into monsters. Packing a bellyful of attitude and a man-size can of whup-ass, Wario must defeat the beasts and recover all his hard-won loot.

Instead of just stomping and kicking his foes (which he also does, of course), Wario subjects them to massive doses of hurt by using whatever comes to hand as an impromptu weapon.

SPIN SPIN



When you've downed an opponent, there's no need to leave it lying on the ground. If you pick it up and start spinning the joystick, Wario will wind up a massive move that can knock down anything standing within range. There's loads of slapstick humour to go with the knockabout violence.



△ Mini-Wario finds that life isn't a bed of roses for the small of stature. Actually, it's more like daisies.



△ This turtle looks like a down-and-out Blastoise. Give him a swig of Wario's Spesh.



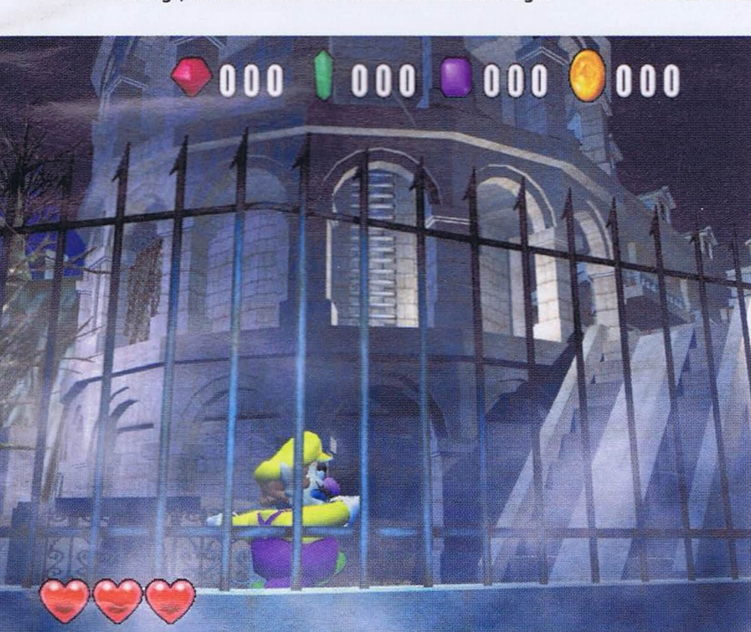


△ Wario isn't invincible like he is in his older Game Boy outings, so be careful not to set his alco-breath alight.



△ Almost anything can be picked up and used as a battering tool.

△ Hard to tell if that's fear or excitement etched on Wario's beautiful face. But the famous purple nose has never looked better than it does on Gamecube.



△ It's all gone a bit *Luigi's Mansion* on us. The creepy locations and strange happenings are very similar to the vacuum-cleaning plumber's game.



△ What a mess! Clean that up, Wario.



△ Frolicking in Wario's warehouse.



△ Spin the joystick to swing enemies.





△ Don't you just want to explore this game? Classic Nintendo stuff.

Wario can grab hold of anything he sees and use it in several ways. After getting a grip on an enemy, he can thump it against a wall, chuck it over a ledge, use it to knock down any other bad guys in the vicinity, or launch himself into a piledriver move to kill it stone-cold dead.

Grabbing pieces of moveable scenery opens up a number of other moves. Small objects can be thrown as weapons or to break through weak walls, and larger objects can be used as clubs or battering rams. Wario can even uproot entire stone columns and swing them around to send his opponents flying.

Conventional Wario moves, such as the trusty power-dash and the ever-useful butt-slam, are still included, and are essential for smashing into hidden areas bursting with treasure.

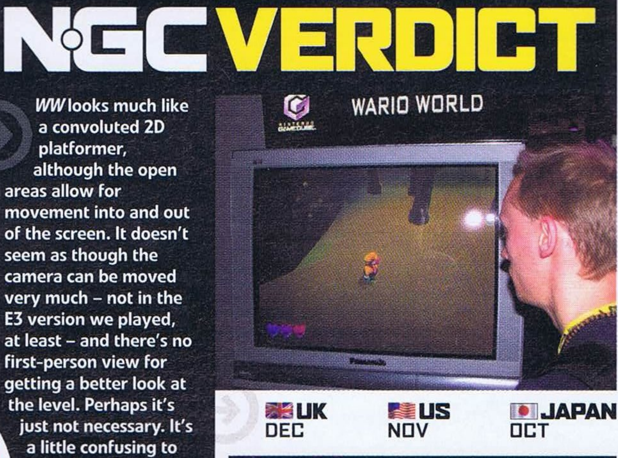
The basement is divided into themed levels. We saw an Egyptian-style area, a carnival level and a haunted house in the E3 version, and there are sure to be many more.

Like previous games in the series, scores play a big part in the gameplay – the more treasure you collect, the better the reward you'll get at the end, which suggests that *Wario World* isn't going to be the biggest game Nintendo have ever produced. But with both *Zelda* and *Mario Sunshine* likely to deliver the longevity goods, there's plenty of room for a slightly shorter – but replayable – *Luigi*-style title.

"WARIO WORLD IS BILLED AS A SIDE-SCROLLING PLATFORMER, BUT THIS AIN'T ANY KIRBY 64"

WARIO FACT
In Wario's first appearance, he sported a David Beckham mohican 'do under his hat. A visionary.

NGC VERDICT



WW looks much like a convoluted 2D platformer, although the open areas allow for movement into and out of the screen. It doesn't seem as though the camera can be moved very much – not in the E3 version we played, at least – and there's no first-person view for getting a better look at the level. Perhaps it's just not necessary. It's a little confusing to play, largely becuase the game isn't quite like anything else around at the moment. The fighting and throwing make it unlike other platform titles – and totally unlike Wario's earlier games. It's fun to play, though, and we can always trust Nintendo to deliver something that'll compel us to fork out another 40 quid when it's released later this year. The talented so-and-sos.

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WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- Loads of secret areas to explore.
- Wario's traditional transformation abilities. Much as we tried, we couldn't set him on fire, turn him into a zombie, squash him flat, make him swell up with nasty allergic reactions, or do any of the other things we're used to seeing on the Game Boy versions. Wario is evil and needs to feel pain!

ANTICIPATION RATING







THE KNOWLEDGE

- Fifty minigames with up to four players competing in each.
- All-new Tag Battle, which lets you team up in pairs and compete to collect stars.
- Handicap mode that allows rubbish players an opportunity to at least win *something*.
- Mini/Giant system that makes players bigger or smaller so they can access secret areas.

THIS LOT ALSO DID…

- Mario Party (NGC/27)

Mazza and his mates appeared in Hudson's original over three years ago. This is the best one.



△ Mario and the boys compete to impress Peach by jumping up and down on ice blocks. As you do.



△ Gamble away your coins in Mario's Vegas-style casino.



△ Rollercoaster-style japes ahoy in this racing minigame.



△ Ever the perfect host, Bowser welcomes you to play his game.



△ He's big, he's bad, he's Bowser – and he likes the occasional shuffle.



△ Nintendo characters in stealing endorsement shocker!



△ Feeling hot hot hot? You will be after running around dodging this Chain Comp.

NGC HANDS-ON AT E3

MARIO PARTY 4

We get to grips with Hudson's Gamecube fourquel. Read on…

Everyone got a bit tired of Hudson's *Mario Party* in the end. The first was great, the second was much the same, and the third was just plain silly. Fortunately, with this Gamecube *Mario Party*, the Japanese developers have introduced well over 50 new minigames, and while they deviate little from the tried and tested racing, target shooting and timing events, Hudson have varied the details enough to ensure that they don't become too dull.

"THERE'S 50 NEW GAMES, BUT THEY DON'T DEVIATE FROM THE TRIED AND TESTED FORMULA"

Early favourites of ours include a frenzied basketball competition, a rollercoaster race and the dubious-sounding Bowser Shuffle. We were also particularly taken by a challenge where you compete to bounce on squeezy blocks of ice on a beach, which also allows the Cube to show off some top transparency effects.

Granted, *Mario Party 4* isn't meant to blow you away on the eye-candy front, but it is a presentational tour de force, with classic Nintendo themes and iconography running strongly throughout the game. More over how it progresses before very long…

NGC VERDICT



Unfortunately, none of the boards were available to play at E3, so it was difficult to get an overall feel for how *Mario Party 4* would pan out. The minigames on offer were okay, but didn't require you to do a lot more than just tap A very hard and very fast. Judging from the minigames, Hudson have stuck pretty much to the same themes as the otehr games, so we'll have to wait and see whether this is anything other than a better looking *Party*. Fingers crossed.

UK XMAS | US 28TH OCT | JAPAN SEPT

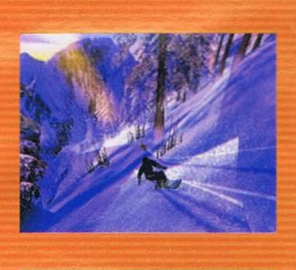
ANTICIPATION RATING: 3





△ The *1080°* series has always prided itself on creating a believable bed of snow to race on, so swirling round corners leaves plenty of powder in your wake.





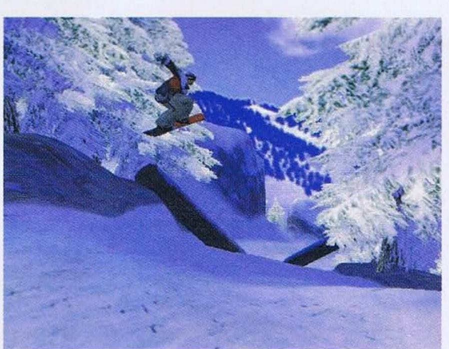




△ The detail on the snowflakes is outstanding.



△ Stunts are based around various grabs and spins.



△ It's possible to use track side objects as ramps.

1080°: WHITE STORM

It's the welcome return of Nintendo's slopes-based thriller.

On a market of urban sports sims that seemed intent of revolving around ludicrous stunts, the original N64 version of *1080°* was a breath of fresh air. It took a simple premise – race down a mountain side – and lifted it to new heights of analogue mastery and real snow effects. But if you thought that was good, get a load of this sequel.

Very much the new *Wave Race*'s spiritual brother, *1080°: White Storm* forgoes the hyperbolic slang-speak and over-the-top tricks of *SSX Tricky* for beautifully realised realism; it's about as hardcore as you can get.

Once again, your border reacts to the tiniest nuance on the mountain's surface, so what starts out as a frustrating environment is soon mastered and turned round to your advantage: witness slightly raised ground sections being used as impromptu ramps, and steeper inclines acting as natural turbos.

The game attains realism by virtue of detail. As you swoosh downhill, the wind causes your baggy trews to balloon, while ice clings to the zips on your anorak top. Take a hard right by pulling back on the analogue to dig the back of the board into the snow, and you'll see particles bellow up.

Add a four-player mode, and things are set up nicely for *1080°* to be the only snowboarding experience you'll ever want to bother with.

THE KNOWLEDGE

- The sequel to the N64's lush *1080°*, sub-titled *White Storm* to tie into their other sports games, including *Wave Race*.
- Being developed in-house at Nintendo Japan after original developers Left Field were given the boot.
- New four-player mode.
- Promised return of original characters like Dion Blaster and Brit Rob Haywood.
- Only around 30% complete.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **1080° Snowboarding (NGC/14)**
  Superb original, replete with some incredible snow effects.
- **The Legend of Zelda 64 (NGC/23)**
  Three and a half years on, and it's still one of the very best.

NGC VERDICT

Unfortunately, *White Storm* wasn't playable at the show – and judging by the look of the footage on offer at Nintendo's stand, it's little wonder: the game plainly is a long, long way from being finished. The areas are pretty sparse and unpopulated, and there was just one boarder. However, the snow effects were excellent and all the scenery was polygonal, so you're not going to be looking at cardboard cut-out trees. A way to go, but looking good.



UK 2003 | US 2003 | JAPAN 2003

ANTICIPATION RATING






4





THE KNOWLEDGE

- **First-person shooter, overseen by Nintendo, but being coded at Retro by the brains behind *Half-Life*, *Quake* and *Turok*.**
- **Explore the vast worlds of Tallon IV, the uncharted planet where *Metroid Prime* is set.**
- **Choose from familiar *Metroid* weaponry such as the Wave Beam and the Freeze Beam.**
- **Use Samus' suit to get round tricky situations – she can roll into a ball, and the weapons are built into her suit.**

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Turok: Dinosaur Hunter (NGC/1)**
  Well, kind of. Some of the *Metroid* team worked on *Turok*.
- **Quake II (PC)**
  Again – some of the team 'did' a 'job' on the PC version of *Quake*.



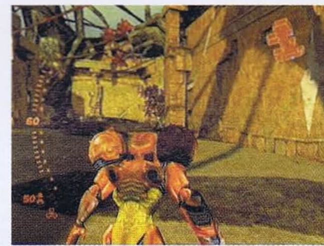
△ The bosses really are incredible in *Metroid* – and they're fast, too. No wonder our energy is running low facing this blighter.



△ The weapons all follow the same kind of shape and dimensions.



△ Don't be fooled. *Metroid Prime*'s not just another mindless bug hunt.



△ The game features a third-person mode, enabling Samus to look around.



△ Bring it on! Millions and millions of bugs see you as the ideal meal. Idiots.

METROID PRIME

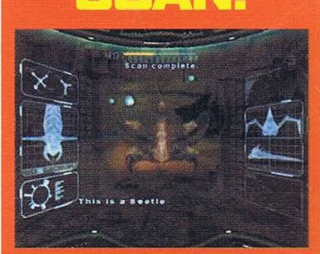
We worried about it, but now we're wondering why. Find out why Turok might be nervous…



With the CVs some of its team boast, you'd have thought development of *Metroid Prime* would be a walk in the park. After all, anyone who worked on *Half-Life* and *Turok* must know a thing or two about making first-person shooters.

But working for the likes of Acclaim and working for Nintendo are two different things – as *Metroid* coders Retro found to their cost when The Big N turned up at their Texas HQ and shut down virtually the entire operation (which included games like *Car Combat* and RPG *Raven Blade*).

SCAN!

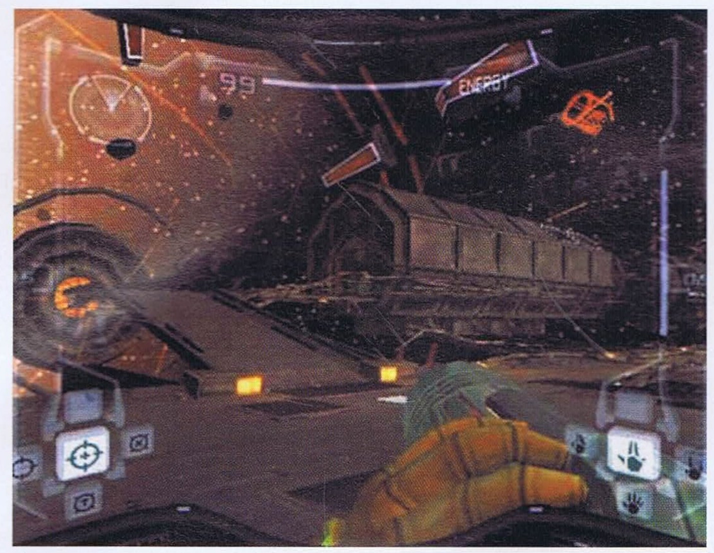


Samus' helmet makes up a large part of *Metroid*. It operates as a scanner – areas of importance glow orange and pressing L scans them. It'll scan just about anything, including corpses – it'll even tell you what they died of. Very useful.

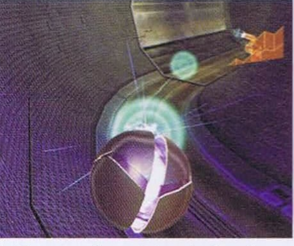
Fortunately, *Metroid* was the one game that survived the cull, and now we're starting to see why. At E3 this month Retro really came up trumps.

Most impressive initially are the environments: rich, vast alien worlds that are slightly reminiscent of *Turok 2*'s Hive levels and the latter part of *Half-Life*. The corridors are hugely atmospheric – walls seem to drip with slime and the textures are brilliantly realised, actually looking squidgy, grim and otherworldly.

The story pretty much takes off where *Super Metroid* left off: after seeing off Mother Brain and the space


△ Visually, this has got to be one of Gamecube's strongest titles so far, making ingenious use of the hardware with expansive, immersive, outstanding locales.

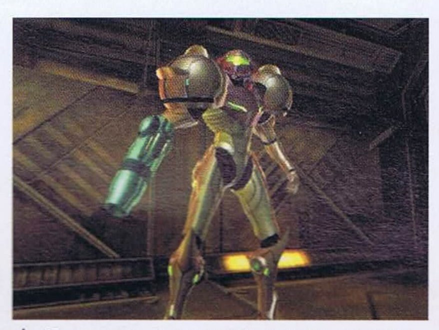

△ The helmet view looks like being a superb touch: as well as doing all manner of useful things, it will also react to different weather conditions, and even mist up.


△ Samus rolls up into a ball and shoots through one of the tunnels.


△ This wreck is where Samus leaps from at the beginning of the game.



△ Gulp. Enemies won't just sit and wait for you to blow their heads apart… they'll come down and attack you.


△ *Mm-mmmm.* Bet she looks real nice out of the costume. Er, we meant, she… oh.


△ Multi-level areas let you spy on enemies below.

pirates, Samus leaves for distant and deserted planet, Tallon IV, and, erm, more space pirates. But, as the trailer at Nintendo's press conference so tantalisingly stated, there's a big, big surprise in store for her. Intriguing.

> **"PERHAPS METROID'S BIGGEST PLUS IS THE PACE AT WHICH IT MOVES – IT'S VERY, VERY FAST"**

The weapons look interesting, too. Some hark back to *Super Metroid* on the SNES: the Freeze Beam, which turns foes into popsicles, is back, and as before, some weapons require charging before firing. Each gun has impressive reflections too, with barrels glinting in the light as you pass through corridors.

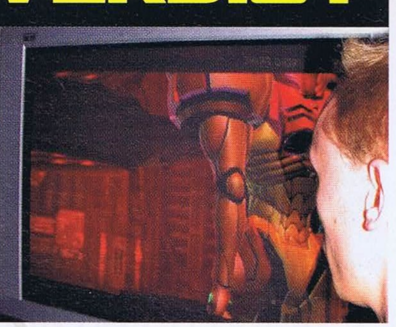
Perhaps *Metroid*'s biggest plus, though, is the pace at which it moves – this game is fast. And not only does Samus crack along, but the enemies do too. Even the bosses launch lightning-quick attacks at you, whipping and ducking towards you before you've had a chance to even blink. One of particular note is a hideous dragon-like beast that breaks out of the earth before raining fiery death down upon you.

And then, of course, there's Samus' suit, which is still shrouded in secrecy despite the playable code at E3. One key thing, though, is her ability to roll up into a ball and shoot through tiny otherwise inaccessible corridors.

December can't come too soon…

NGC VERDICT

Metroid isn't far behind *Mario* and *Zelda* in terms of 'wow' factor – after spending a good time with it, we left only to find ourselves wanting a bit more. It's obvious a lot of thought has gone into making it something other than just another first-person shooter; this is probably most evident in terms of Samus' suit and the way it moves, shape-shifts and reacts to enemies. Equally impressive are the smaller touches. For example, when you fire into a wall, the screen shakes and brightens, and you can see Samus' reflection in the helmet. But it does the big things well, too – the bosses, to take one example, are incredible, with the E3 demo sporting a first-level beast that was simply *amazing*. After all the problems, this is now looking stunning.



UK	US	JAPAN
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WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

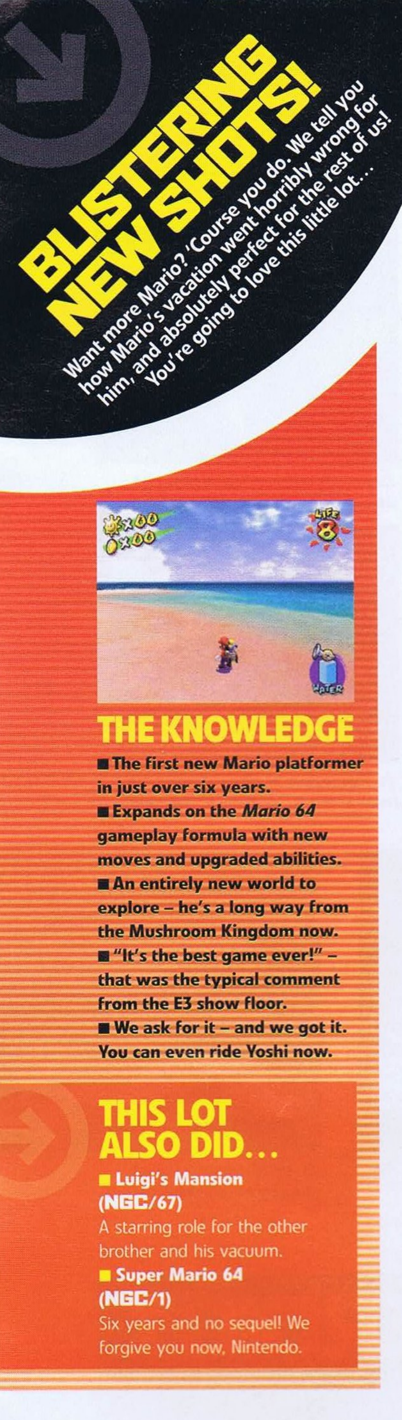
- More human foes. There's certainly plenty of bugs to fire at in *Metroid*, but we want real people to kill too!
- Come on, let's have a multiplayer mode. Retro and Nintendo are keeping schtum so far, but it would work a treat.
- Running sections where you get to the end of a level then have to belt it back, sprinting away from an explosion.

ANTICIPATION RATING





5



YOSHI
Over a decade after his Super Mario World debut, everyone's favourite Koopa-munching reptile returns to his rightful position – wedged between Mario's ample buttocks.

COINS
They're everywhere! Mario might have travelled far from the Mushroom Kingdom but he still has an eye for other people's loose change. Collecting 100 coins wins you an extra life.

H2-WHOAH!
It's a holiday island and there's loads of water around the place. Mario swims in it, jetskis on it, uses it for propulsion and squirts it to clean things.

BOOM!
Just like in Super Mario World, Yoshi's heavy boots flatten characters with a single stomp, producing a puff of smoke and launching the dynamic duo straight up in the air.

MARIO SUNSHINE

Going green and soaking up a few rays with the game we've waited six years to play...





Link might have stolen the show at E3 but Nintendo's original mascot isn't about to roll over and let some pixie stomp all over him. No, sir!

Super Mario Sunshine is the game we all hoped in vain was going to arrive on the N64 a few years ago – the sequel to the ground-breaking *Super Mario 64*. It's taken a while but the wait has been worth it.

Having played the E3 version we can confidently predict that the N64's 1996 launch title's days as the best 3D platformer ever made are numbered. July 28th this year is when *Super Mario Sunshine* will be released in Japan, with the PAL conversion following not very long after in October.

Quite a few things have changed in the past six years, and the new game sees Mario taking a vacation far away from the Mushroom Kingdom. Unfortunately his holiday paradise has been blighted by hefty dollups of pollution which take the form of greasy oil slicks and giant copies of traditional Mario enemies made from the same sticky brown slime.

Mario's task is to clean up the mess using the mysterious backpack that's had us all speculating about its possible functions ever since the first screenshots were released. Getting our hands on the controller has made everything much clearer. The backpack is used mainly for washing away the muck which oozes around the landscape, although it has a couple of other uses that very cleverly enhance Mario's abilities.

By directing the nozzle at the ground Mario can hover for a short period of time or slow down towards the end of a long jump to allow for a precision landing. It's a very cool feature that reduces the chance of overshooting when trying to land on a tiny platform, but doesn't reduce the all-important feeling of triumphant accomplishment you get when you complete an objective or



Δ Don't waste your time talking to the hideous Brown Toad, Mario. He'll only try to steal your limelight. Check out page 119 for some fascinating Toad-related facts.

TALKING MARIO
Mario can chat to the locals by pressing the B-button. Most of the conversations are text only, but there are a few spoken lines as well.

Δ The sun tokens, as seen in the background there, are what Mario collects in the absence of the usual stars (they're back at Peach's place).

Δ Break out the water jet and see if Mario can swoosh pineapples around the streets.

make it to an area that previously seemed impossible to reach.

Mario can also blast things out of the way using the water jet, which leads to a brand new way of solving problems. Weaker enemies can be washed around the streets like England fans in front of a police water-cannon. If the bad guy is too big to be sluiced away then there are often other items such as beach balls that can be blasted around and used to attack certain weak points.

The main hub of the game is the holiday island itself, with extra areas and sub-levels hidden inside houses or accessible only after Mario has gained additional abilities and unlocked doors. From what we could tell during our time with the game there seems to be an impressive amount of things to see and do, although many areas were locked off in the E3 version. Rest assured there will be plenty of surprises in store, and what we saw in Los Angeles was effectively just a taste of what's to come.

As well as expanding on the peerless gameplay of *Super Mario 64*, this new outing includes extra features from much older *Mario* games. The rotating gates set into

"MARIO CAN HOVER FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME OR SLOW DOWN FOR LANDING..."

HANGMAN

Admittedly, Mazza could do this in *Super Mario 64* too but not quite as adeptly as he does now. And in *Sunshine* there are rotating gates set into the fences so he can get to the other side with a swift, sharp punch. Oh Mario, you hairy little Italian beauty...



"The most pleasing part of *Sunshine* is the return of Yoshi"



△ It's a giant Piranha Plant made from what looks suspiciously like sewage. Spray it, Mazza!



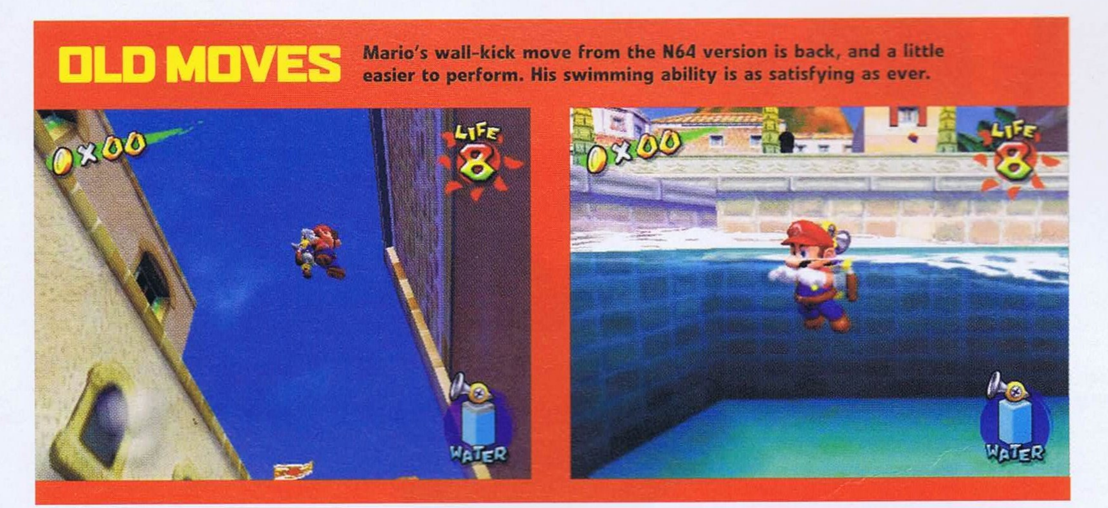
△ Not a pretty sight. Mario and Peach wanted to have a quiet picnic in the town square, but instead Toad has been engulfed by a tidal wave of living poo.



△ A strange bunch of people live on the island. Even the 'men' wear hula skirts, which is probably why Mario ought to consider shaving that moustache.

OLD MOVES

Mario's wall-kick move from the N64 version is back, and a little easier to perform. His swimming ability is as satisfying as ever.



chain-link fences are straight out of *Super Mario World*, as is the game's most pleasing new feature – the return of Yoshi. Since making a late, purely cosmetic appearance at the end of *Mario 64*, the loveable little lizard was last seen teaming up with Mario in order to kick his face off in *Super Smash Bros.*

Now he's restored to his original role as Mario's shock absorber, pounding enemies into pancakes and turning edible treats into extra lives.

There's loads more too. Mario's shell-surfing antics are back with a vengeance in a *Wave Race*-style sub-game; rotating the stick before jumping makes him do a super jump; doing a belly-slide through a pool of oil leaves a greasy trail on the ground and a filthy (but washable) mess down Mario's front; squirting the water gun while standing on a power line makes the whole thing sway back and forth… oh, there's loads.

And that's just in the six playable areas shown at E3. Whoah!

NGC VERDICT

It wasn't quite the most impressive looking game at the show (*Zelda* is much more striking) but it was probably the most fun to play. For any fan of *SM64*, picking up the pad and making Mario leap around is like coming home. The little guy has been away too long. And even though *Zelda* is more eye-catching there are quite a few moments in *Mario Sunshine* that are every bit as eye-poppingly beautiful as the special effects such as the rippling paintings, shimmering pools and Metal Mario were in 1996. There's one scene in which Mario can run around a huge circular mirror, making it tilt and reflect the sky, the sunlight, and the entire world as it moves. Thumbs up to whichever Nintendo code genius designed that little number.



UK OCTOBER | US SEPT | JAPAN JULY

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

■ To be honest it looks like Nintendo have included about everything we could have hoped for. Still no sign of that once-talked-of two-player mode, though…
■ The biggest unanswered question is exactly how long the game will last for experienced *Mario* players. We want it to last a lot longer than *Luigi's Mansion*.

ANTICIPATION RATING



FASTER LONGER BETTER!

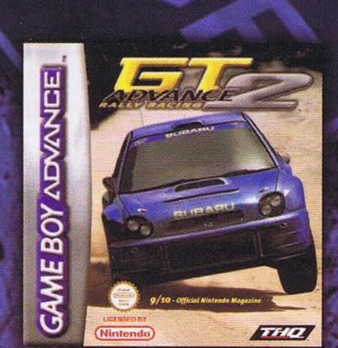
THE NEXT GENERATION OF GT ADVANCE IS HERE



ADVANCE TO THE NEXT STAGE

- Sequel to the bestseller GT Advance Championship Racing
- 15 of the world's top rally cars - each with individual characteristics
- 42 tracks in multiple world climates across 14 different stages.
- 7 modes of play including multiplayer via GBA link cable
- Lifelike co-driver helps you navigate the tough spots
- Action Replay Mode
- Battery enabled for advanced save game option







GAME BOY ADVANCE





THE KNOWLEDGE

- Set eight years after the N64's *Lylat Wars*, *Starfox Adventures* sees Fox going up against the corrupt General Scales.
- You're aided in your quest by Slippy, Peppy, Rob the Robot and a triceratops called... Prince Tricky! Strewth, Rare.
- Adventure across prehistoric worlds and fly through space.
- *Zelda*-style lock-on combat.
- Fox can change appearance.
- Originally planned for the N64 under the name *Dinosaur Planet*.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **GoldenEye (NGC/9)**
A first-person shooter you may have heard of. Breathtaking.
- **Banjo-Kazooie (NGC/18)**
Bird and Bear living in perfect harmony. Brilliant platformer.

STARFOX ADVENTURES

We get our hands on the latest version of Rare's *Starfox Adventures*. And it's very, *very* impressive stuff…



The Rare rumour mill might be operating at somewhere north of full power these days, but you can rest assured that *Starfox Adventures* is very definitely a Gamecube exclusive.

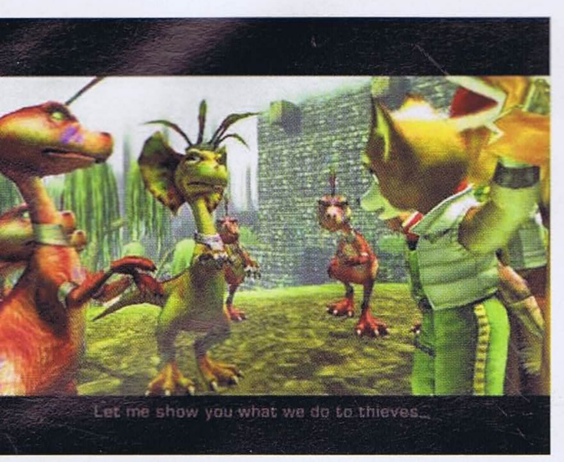
And what an exclusive.

There is a plot of sorts but, as with most Rare games, plot ain't what's important – it's what your eyes are seeing and your fingers are doing that's the real meat. Suffice to say, though, there's not much to give Hollywood scriptwriters sleepless nights, as Fox McCloud gets to explore vast dinosaur-littered worlds in an attempt to see off the dastardly General Scales, along with regular sidekicks Slippy and Peppy plus newbies (ahem) Tricky and Rob.

The accusation that *Starfox* plays like a *Zelda* clone with talking foxes and dinosaurs is easy to pull out of the hat, but it's justified all the same. That tricky-to-locate Z button on the Gamecube joypad acts as a lock-on device, meaning that Link-style circling of enemies can be combined with a variety of fancy-looking rolling and jumping moves, which would see you careering off the screen under lesser control systems. Certainly, if you're going to be blatant about wearing your development influences on your sleeve, you might as well plunder from the pad perfection that is *Ocarina of Time* – perhaps the greatest, most expertly built control system ever created.

> **"RARE'S GAMES ALWAYS LOOK GORGEOUS, BUT STARFOX IS QUITE SIMPLY SOMETHING ELSE"**

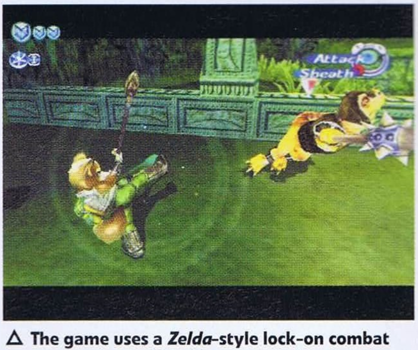
But Rare's latest baby also contains a few tantalising quirks of its own. First up, Fox is able to shape-shift into



△ Regional accents ahoy! *Starfox* boasts a colourful cast… all with stupid West Country voices.



△ Using the C-stick to select additional items, Fox can call on a wide range of extras when in combat, including enchantment spells.


△ The game uses a *Zelda*-style lock-on combat system, so moves like this are a cinch to execute.


△ Even the fur looks real on the character models.

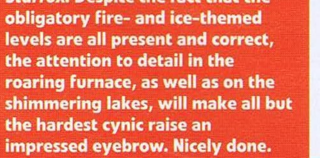


△ Your faithful dino companion Prince Tricky shuffles after you as you explore the vast game areas. He can also be called into action with a flick of the C-stick.



△ The game may be set on a planet ruled by tyrannical dinosaurs, but from the look of the temple here, those beasts also know a thing or two about architecture. Clever lot.

FIERY!



The ground-level environments are looking pretty darn swanky in *Starfox*. Despite the fact that the obligatory fire- and ice-themed levels are all present and correct, the attention to detail in the roaring furnace, as well as on the shimmering lakes, will make all but the hardest cynic raise an impressed eyebrow. Nicely done.

an array of other beings, which enables him to pass through tricky or otherwise non-negotiable areas in the gaming world and out the other side.

Interestingly, there's also a prime role played by Prince Tricky, your faithful triceratops of an old hound-dawg. With a few deft flicks of the C-stick, he can be ordered around like a kind of semi-autonomous monster. For instance, pushing down will cause him to dig around in the ground for hidden items. Later on, this translates into an increased element of strategy, where Tricky becomes a vital aid during battles – you can command your horned friend to distract one enemy while you face up to the other. And he's not just an extension of Fox's searching abilities, either.

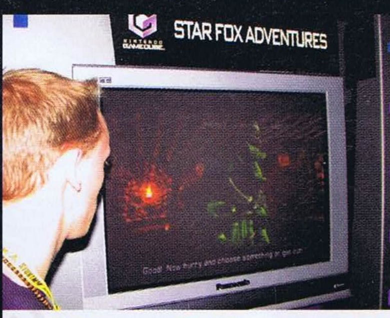
On the evidence of what we played at E3, what's most impressive is the general texture work and, in particular, the detail on the animals themselves. Rare's games always look gorgeous, but *Starfox Adventures* is something else – genuinely the next stage in visual evolution. Beautiful.

The clincher will be how well the *Zelda*-esque exploring and snappy space-blasting mesh together – from what we've seen it seems to work well, but the space battles don't look as compelling as the adventuring, which should make the final, 40-hour version very interesting to behold.

FOX IN SPACE!
It may look like an adventure game, but *Starfox Adventures* also lets you hop into an Arwing craft for some top space-shooting action!

NGC VERDICT

First off, you'll be amazed by the visuals: stunning locations, a super-smooth frame-rate, and some unbelievable textures. The game itself isn't too shabby either. The control system is pretty simplistic – most of the main actions, such as unsheathing weapons and picking up and using objects, are performed via the A-button. Aside from that, this feels very similar to *Ocarina of Time*: you can use Z to lock on to enemies to allow for circle strafing, at which point tapping A or X will unleash a variety of combos and backflips. To be fair, though, the moves available to Fox are much more flamboyant than those available to Link. The only downside is the awful, *awful* regional accents… shame about that.



UK 6 SEPT | US SEPT | JAPAN TBA

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- The ability to change the names of your allies. Who wants to call on someone named Rob The Robot for help? Rare make great games, but they definitely don't do great names.
- An option for subtitles only. The accents in *Starfox* are truly excruciating.
- More rain effects! When it pours down on Dinosaur Planet, it looks *stunning*.

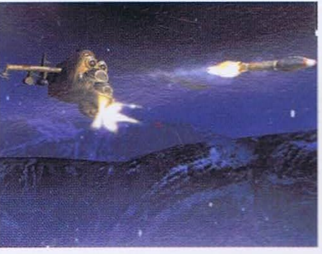
ANTICIPATION RATING



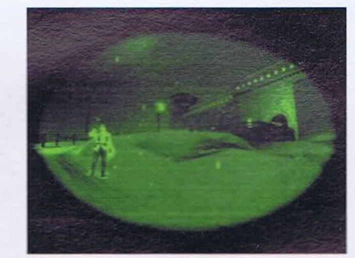

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IT'S EPIC
IT'S PERSONAL
STAR WARS TRADING CARD GAME
ATTACK OF THE CLONES
AVAILABLE NOW
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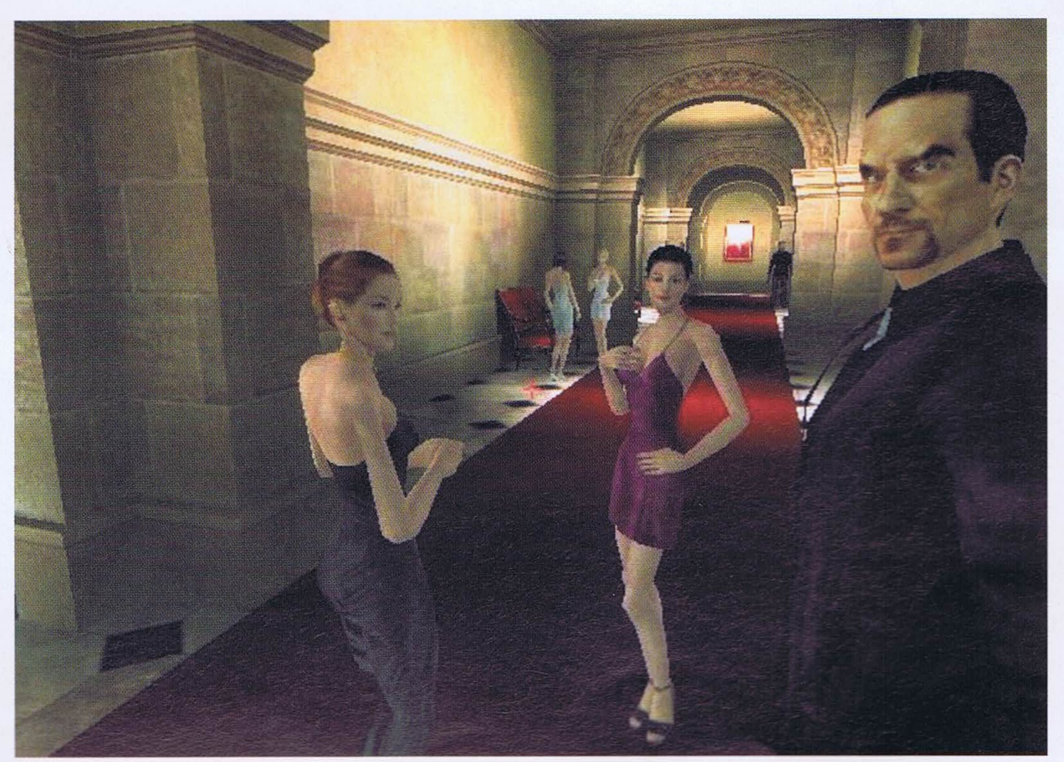
△ *Nightfire* introduces a totally new Bond and a new Bond storyline. To be fair, *Agent Under Fire* had a decent script – it just wasn't quite good enough at the rest.



△ Cut-scenes help to shove the story along and introduce the villians...



△ Night sights. These beauties come in handy during the snowy opener.



△ It's unclear as of yet whether this eyebrow-arching fool is a nemesis of yours or not. However, you can rest assured that ladies will make up a large part of the *Nightfire* experience. Okay, probably about time we attempted re-entry...

NGC WORLD'S BIGGEST GAMECUBE MAG HANDS-ON AT E3

THE KNOWLEDGE

- Set across ten world locations.
- First-person shooter sections combine with tasty driving levels, built by the developers behind *Need for Speed*.
- Upgradeable items available from Q, including the Q Hook.
- A Bond that looks nothing like Pierce Brosnan, plus token lovelies with heaving bosoms.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Duke Nukem Zero Hour (NGC/28)**
  A superior 3D action shooter, with Nukem offing pigs. Neat.
- **40 Winks (NGC/35)**
  A great-looking, but ultimately disappointing, 3D platformer.

JAMES BOND 007 NIGHTFIRE

Agent Under Fire is coming out here next month – and you won't have to wait long for the follow-up. Now pay attention...



Back after a few sly Martinis, Eurocom, the team behind *The World Is Not Enough* and this month's *Harry Potter* (turn the page for more on that) are close to finishing off an all-new Bond adventure. This time though you'll be journeying from the depths of the Pacific Ocean to the vastness of zero-gravity outer space, on a mission to prevent supervillain Rafael Drake from crushing the globe. Job done.

Nightfire is an all-new Bond outing based on nothing but the imagination of, er, EA, and buys into the stealth trend of many contemporary first-person shooters, giving you the option of sneaking around and picking off guards in a meticulous manner, or running in, guns ablaze.

For instance, an early level sees you prowling outside an old stately castle in the snow, scaling its walls and taking out guards at gunpoint until you manage to infiltrate the swanky party going on inside. Populated with high class ladies of ill-repute and shifty-looking Russian spies, it's like the Cold War never ended. In this instance – and just for the record – we 'popped' them.

Bond aficionados will be relieved to hear that a comprehensive range of gizmos and gadgets will be available to use from the Q-Lab. Additionally, the game stays true to the Bond films – and the recent *Agent Under Fire*, reviewed last issue on US import – by interjecting the first-person action with a number of chase scenes, done by the *Need For Speed* creators.

Nightfire also includes a nod to *GoldenEye* with its four-player mode; and while it doesn't look like living up to Rare's defining moment, it should offer enough atmosphere and stylish action to stand proud on its own.

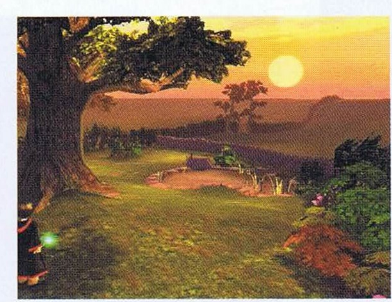


FIRST EVER SHOTS!

Get your peepers round these first shots from the *Harry Potter* game currently being beavered away at by Eurocom, the coders behind *The World is Not Enough*.



△ Watch the Potter Boy as he fires off spells.



△ The locations are looking very pleasant.



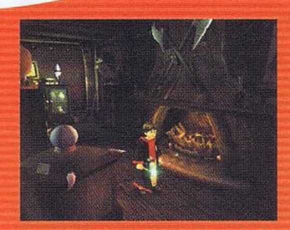
△ Rustle up a brew and test it out on the inhabitants of Hogwart.



△ Wow. The game purports to offer freedom – imagine if you can go inside all the buildings...



△ This reminds us a little of Eurocom's N64 game *40 Winks*.



THE KNOWLEDGE

- Based on the second book – Harry P returns to Hogwarts.
- Enlist the help of Hermione, Ron, Hagrid and Hedwig as you learn second-year spells.
- 'Free-roaming' 3D adventure.
- Spells which can have either a positive or negative effect on the game's direction.
- Minigames, special items and secret areas to discover.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **The World is Not Enough (NGC/44)**

Not quite as good as Rare's *GoldenEye*, but still a great Bond first-person shooter.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

NGC HANDS-ON AT E3

Return to Hogwarts with the Potterer in Eurocom's latest...

Calling this a 'free-roaming adventure' is a bold claim – a 3D adventure along the lines of *Mario* would be closer to the mark, though plainly nowhere near as good. Still, this gaming rendition of JK Rowling's universe is shaping up nicely under the guiding hand of Eurocom.

> **"CAST SPELLS, INTERACT WITH THE LIKES OF MOANING MYRTLE AND COMPLETE MINIGAMES"**

The plot follows the book fairly closely, with Harry returning to Hogwarts to learn second-year spells, along with mates Hermione, Ron, Hagrid and Hedwig, in an effort to discover who the heck the Heir of Slytherin is. Mmm. Interesting.

This translates into a tidy little game, with the opportunity to cast spells, as well as move around and interact with the characters that inhabit Harry's world, including Moaning Myrtle and Ron. There's also some nice-looking minigames, such as de-gnoming Mrs Weasley's garden and challenging other students in Professor Lockhart's Dueling Club.

If we had one criticism of this, it would be that in comparison with what Nintendo dished out at E3 with *Mazza*, *Zelda* and *Starfox*, this wasn't quite doing enough to convince us.

NGC VERDICT



Eurocom are – as expected – doing a sterling job turning the books into a neat, playable adventure. The *TWINE* coders have really captured the magical feel of Hogwarts, though we still remain bigger fans of their first-person shooters than we do of their third-person adventures. Still, we're willing to give this a go as it develops over the coming months. We're told it will broomstick its way to us in time for a late November release. Good show.

UK	US	JAPAN
NOV	NOV	UNLIKELY

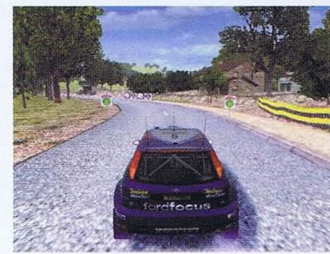
ANTICIPATION RATING: 3

Codemasters get Cubed with McRae threequel

△ The gigantic number of polygons used on the cars alone mean that everything from active brake lights to the insides of the vehicles can be seen. Mind you, the snow and tree effects aren't too shabby either...



△ Relay modes veer towards the photo-realistic end of the scale...



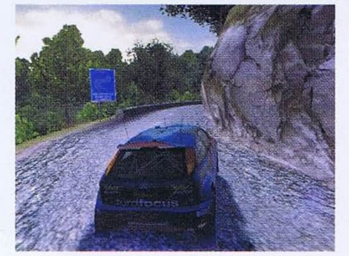
△ Drive like a madman to save seconds on straights like these.



△ When viewing the game live from the driver's seat, the weather conditions not only affect your car's performance on the road, but your vision too.



△ The fog and mist effects add to the atmosphere of certain stages.



△ Judicious use of the brakes should stop you falling off here. We hope.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

We've got the skinny on McRae's first Nintendo outing...

News that Codemasters are bringing some of their most renowned franchises to Nintendo's dinky box of tricks should have rally enthusiasts grinning from ear to ear. Why? In short, *Colin McRae Rally 3*: the latest in what's generally regarded as the greatest series of console rally games ever.

The structure is simple enough – compete for the Ford Rally Sport International Championship over three game-years – but the reality is much harder: negotiating rain, hail and snow as you tour the world in search of more impressive times is a tough task, even before you take into account the game's spot-on handling.

Get ready to be careering down mud-laden country lanes one minute then negotiating a precarious mountain edge the next, all set in real outdoors locations. Thankfully, this is where the handling really kicks in: like past incarnations of the series, you have to practise then practise some more, mastering every last nuance.

As well as actually getting to 'be' Colin McRae, Codemasters promise that you'll be able to interact with his real-life co-driver a lot better than before – this feature, though, is being kept under wraps at their HQ.

Even by next-gen console standards, *Colin McRae* looks stupidly impressive, with everything from exhaust fumes, reflections and rain to interior detail being accurately modelled. The obscene number of polygons per car - rumoured to be well over the 10,000 mark – may just have something to do with that.

We're looking forward to this.

THE KNOWLEDGE

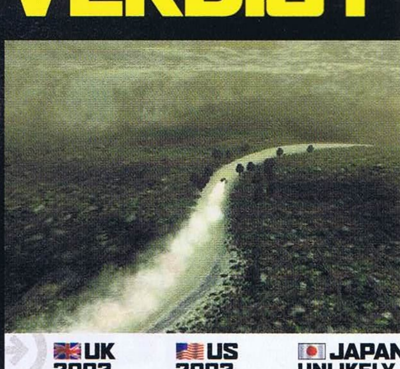
- Codies' on-off relationship with The Big N is on again – this will be their first Nintendo project since *Micro Machines* on the N64.
- Race around eight countries over a three-year period for the Ford Rally Sport trophy.
- Atmospheric weather effects range from snow and rain to mist on the moors. Very nice.
- Interact with your co-driver to shave seconds off your time.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Micro Machines 64 (NGC/25)** Decent if old-school N64 racer. Nice little multiplayer, mind.
- **Colin McRae Rally 2 (PlayStation, PC)** Fantastic sequel to an already impressive first game.



Codemasters only made the official announcement about *McRae* for Cube a couple of days before E3, so there wasn't a playable version at the show. However, the Xbox version – which is going to be pretty much identical to Gamecube – is further along, and was looking very nice indeed. Fans of Colin will rejoice at the pixel-perfect handling, but what really stands out is the attention to detail – the scenery, for one, is outstanding. Blimey, things are looking up.



UK 2003 | US 2003 | JAPAN UNLIKELY

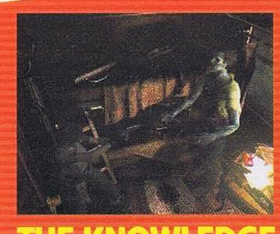










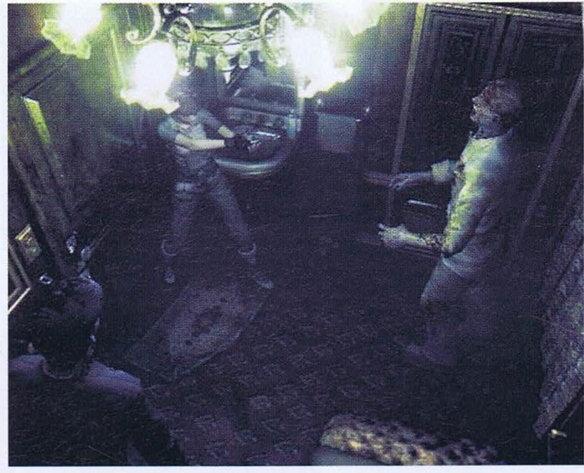



THE KNOWLEDGE

- The *Resident Evil* timeline places this one right at the start of the zombie-slaying survival horror series.
- Switch between two playable characters at any time during the game, or have the computer take care of the inactive one.
- Drop items anywhere and return for them later.
- The first 100 per cent original, previously unseen *Resident Evil* title released for Gamecube. And it's format exclusive too.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Resident Evil (NGC/68)** Visually stunning reworking of the original PlayStation game.
- **Resident Evil 2 (NGC/36)** At 512Mb, this occupied the biggest N64 cartridge ever.



△ This is no time to be using the bathroom.



△ Just look at the detail in the background artwork. Very atmospheric.



△ Zombies to the left of her, zombies to the right. Thank goodness for firearms…



△ Like the other GC *Resi*, it's possible to switch auto-targets between zombies.



△ The trusty shotgun proves to be a reliable way to put them to sleep.



△ Two characters means double the firepower.

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

The original survival horror game goes back to the source to bring you an untold story of zombies and runaway trains…



On June 1998, Special Tactics and Rescue Squad (S.T.A.R.S.) Bravo Team was dispatched by helicopter to investigate a series of bizarre, apparently cannibalistic murders committed in the mountains outside the Mid-western US town of Raccoon City.

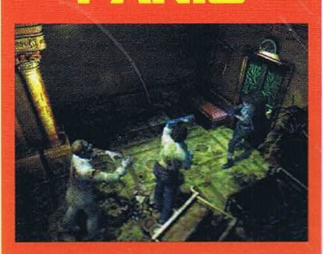
Twenty-four hours later all contact with the six team members had been lost, and a second group, Alpha Team, was sent out to search for them. The wreckage of the helicopter was discovered in the woods, along with the half-eaten remains of what used to be Bravo Team…

It's a story you'll be familiar with if you've played the first *Resident Evil*, and it's a videogame classic. But what happened to Bravo Team during the day leading up to the gruesome discovery? How could the recently deceased be walking around in the forest? And who in the world was responsible for the carnage?

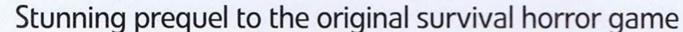
This is where *Resident Evil Zero* comes in, filling in the gaps from the previous 24 hours to reveal the true horror of Bravo Team's fate and explain what they had uncovered about the origin of the undead horde.

It begins with the team deciding to split up to check out two separate locations – one of which is a train, stopped dead on the tracks that are running through the woods. Inexperienced S.T.A.R.S. officer

PANIC



The game's unrivalled feeling of tension tends to come from the fact that your ammo is so limited while the zombies are so hard to kill. You can fill them with an entire clip of bullets and they'll still shuffle towards you. Even when you finally kill one, its mates won't be far behind.



Stunning prequel to the original survival horror game

BILLY COHEN

Handcuff-wearing former Navy SEAL Billy Cohen was accused of a massive 23 murders (don't you just hate it when that happens?), but escaped while being transported to prison on the train. Given the situation he finds himself in right now, he may well wish he was safely tucked up in jail, even if that meant sharing a slop bucket with Bubba-Ray Doorshunter.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

The lighting effects are stunning. It's hard to believe the game uses pre-rendered backgrounds, because the way light from outside the windows casts flickering shadows when the train starts to move makes it look incredibly 'alive'. Except all but two of the passengers are dead…

REBECCA CHAMBERS

A rookie S.T.A.R.S. special officer who's going to have to toughen up very, very quickly as she becomes drawn further into the most dangerous and most unsavoury assignment of her brief career to date… That's why she's wearing pop socks and turn-ups.

TICKETS, PLEASE

Regular rail travellers will be well used to dealing with shambling, slurring, funny-smelling staff members, but on this particular commuter express the train's crew are genuine zombies. Railcard or no railcard, these guys will demand the ultimate excess fare – your brains!

LONG AWAITED We first saw *Resi 0* at E3 two years ago, when it was a 20 per cent complete N64 title. The transformation to this GC version is truly amazing.

Rebecca Chambers duly sets off with two colleagues to investigate…

In terms of gameplay, it seems like typical *Resident Evil* stuff, and very much like the other Gamecube *Resi* title. But after a few minutes of play, it becomes apparent just what a difference two big new additions make to the way action progresses.

> **"YOU CAN SWITCH BETWEEN BILLY AND REBECCA VIA THE PARTNER-ZAPPING FEATURE"**

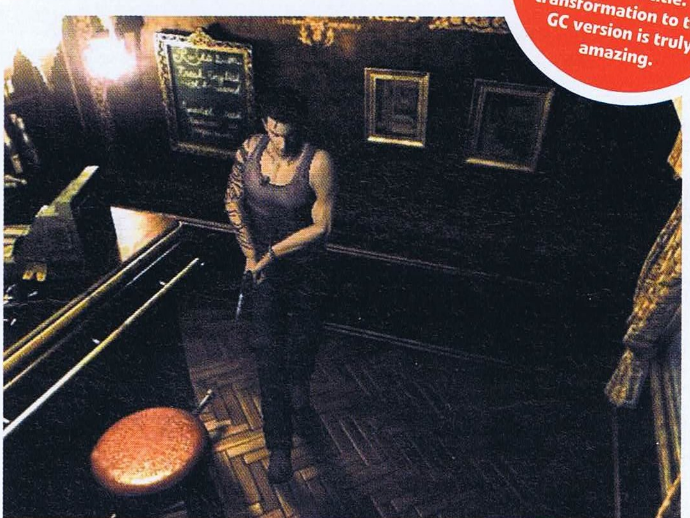
First up is the ability to drop objects anywhere you like. It might not sound like much, but inventory items in other *Resi* games can only be thrown away or exchanged by opening trunks – a legacy of the limited memory and saving capacity available when the series began on the PlayStation. Now that it's possible to actually discard something you didn't mean to pick up, it's a rather more lifelike experience.

The second addition is more fundamental – a second playable character.

RENDERED



The game uses what Capcom calls 'full-motion animated' background graphics. They're pre-rendered in the usual manner, and have layers of moving textures, lighting, reflections and polygonal objects applied over the top. The result, as you can see, is simply astonishing. And it's only on Gamecube.



"You play a convicted mass murderer"

RUNAWAY TRAIN

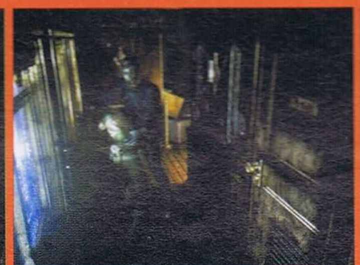
Plenty of people will tell you otherwise, but we're fairly sure nobody has ever actually suffered a journey quite as nightmarish as the one Rebecca embarks upon when she purchases a one-way ticket to Zombieville.



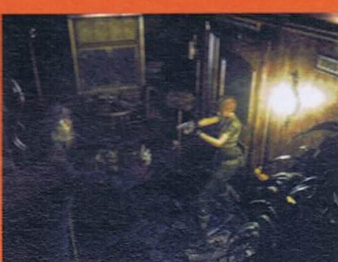
■ He's wearing a uniform, so maybe he only wants to check your ticket or remind you not to put your feet on the seats. Then again, perhaps the peeling skin, rotten breath and murmurs of "brraaains" are warning signs.



■ "Nnnuuh… nnnuhhstoooppp… Chiiipppenhaaaaammmmm…"



■ No, this isn't the same picture. He just knocked Rebecca's hat off.



■ Where are the Transport Police when you need them?



Once you've found the condemned prisoner Billy Cohen, you can switch between him and Rebecca at any time via the 'partner zapping' feature. They can be sent off to separate locations to solve certain puzzles, or you can just choose to control the character you like the best. Naturally, each has specific strengths and weaknesses (Billy is a convicted mass-murderer while Rebecca is an 18-year-old girl), so they'll have to work as a team.

One thing to bear in mind is that if you leave one character alone and wander off with the other, your abandoned friend will be vulnerable to zombies, and may be attacked. When they're in the same room, though, the character you're not directly controlling will pitch in. And we're not talking about firing a couple of random shots, *Rogue Leader* style.

Say you're playing as Billy, for example – a zombie descends on you, your trigger clicks down on an empty chamber, and just as you're about to get your face eaten off, Rebecca sticks a pistol in its mouth and ventilates the back of its head. Gruesome, yet effective.

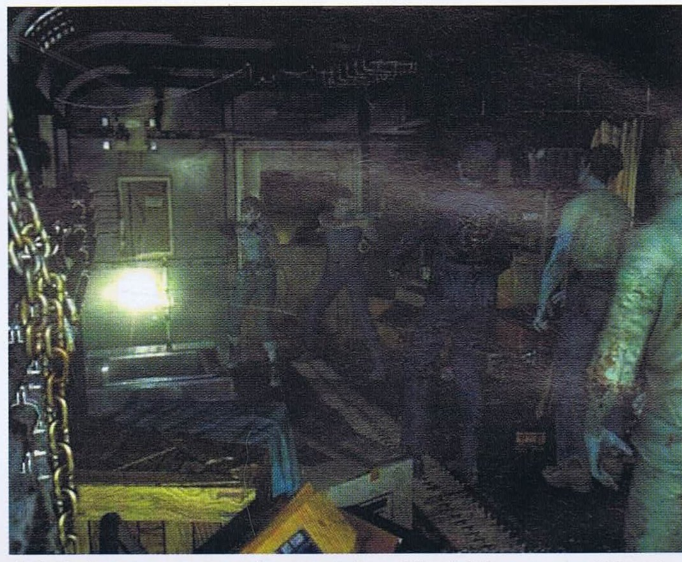
The visuals are done in the same style as *Resi 1*, and even share some of the animation routines, but *Zero* is the better-looking game. It's hard to put a finger on it – maybe it's just because the train environment lends itself to such spooky moving light effects. But it's definitely better.

"THE VISUALS ARE IN THE SAME STYLE AS RESI 1, BUT ZERO IS THE BETTER-LOOKING GAME"

NEXT STOP…
As you can see from some of these screens, the entire game doesn't take place on board the train. Where will the Raccoon City Special stop?



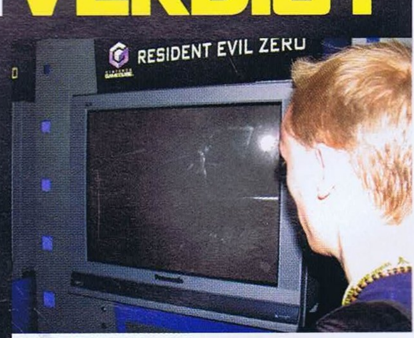
△ Didn't the one on the right used to play in defence for Burnley? All zombies had a former life, but there's no time to feel sorry for them when they're after you.



△ Both characters are very adept at gunplay – Billy slightly more so, which makes sense given that rather embarrassing 23-people-slaughtered episode.

NGC VERDICT

We can't overstate how impressive this game looks. When Capcom showed the first video footage at their pre-E3 press conference there were gasps and spontaneous applause from an audience used to getting sneak peeks at big forthcoming titles. If we have one negative comment it would have to be that for all its visual flair it's just another *Resi* with a few clever new features – although at the show the 180° turn on the C-stick seemed to be missing. Bizarre. Still, this is going to be outstanding. In fact, it's so good it'll make even the staunchest of PS2 fans sprint to the nearest hardware shop and hand over the money for Nintendo's little purple wonder. Get ready for gore…



UK	US	JAPAN
TBA	TBA	AUGUST

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- Plenty of use made of the character switching feature. It's the most significant update to *Resi*'s gameplay in ages.
- Loads and loads of gore. Goes without saying, really. But – genuinely – *loads*.
- Less of the kind of scenes that see you legging it from an unkillable number of zombies, and more of the kind of sudden frights that can soil a trouser at 20 paces.

ANTICIPATION RATING







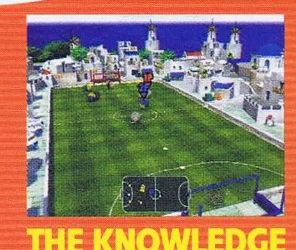
5


"SINCE WHEN DID MERLIN HAVE THE MONOPOLY ON MAGIC?"
Kiss my muddied boots. Welcome the new wizard of the turf.
You won't believe your eyes. See the bend on that goal?
Only those blessed by the magical touch achieve such miracles.
This is Virtua Striker 3 ver.2002. Sheer adrenaline fuelled football action,
razor sharp graphics and staggering multi-angle replays.
Play and be forever bewitched.
Virtua Striker 3 ver.2002
Play to be worshipped
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△ Watch him roll! Aiai makes his way along one of *Monkey Ball 2*'s courses – another beautiful environment surrounds it like a perfectly fitting glove. Yum.



THE KNOWLEDGE

- With the first *Monkey Ball* selling heaps more copies than expected, Sega have decided to go ahead with version two.
- Over 150 floors to negotiate, plus a ten-world story mode.
- Six brand-new party games have been included, as well as the original six. Newbies include Rafting, Football, Tennis and Baseball. Oldies include Pool.
- Tilt the floor to roll the ball – with a monkey in it – to the goal at the end of the level.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Super Monkey Ball (NGC/67)**
A terrific Gamecube take on *Marble Madness*. Play it now.
- **Sonic Adventure 2 (NGC/67)**
Sega at half-power. Good, just not as brilliant as it should be.

CAN YOU KICK IT?

Monkeys can. Well, they can inside their glass balls. Yep, it's Monkey Football – and it's more fun than shaking a simian. Look and learn as we take you through the game's all-new footie mode...











SUPER MONKEY

Bingo! The monkeys are back – bigger, better and ballier than ever. We give you the rundown.

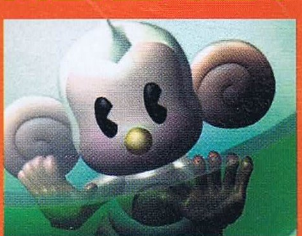




With its genius premise, delightful visuals, top notch minigames and tear-inducingly tricky puzzles, the original *Monkey Ball* was loved by just about anyone who spent a couple of seconds with it. So as we wandered into the Simian section of E3, it wasn't too much of a surprise to see a gaggle of hungry homo sapiens haggling for a go on this sequel.

If, like us, you're still ripping out hair over the original's puzzle mode, the revelation that the sequel comes with 150 all-new floors to strut your monkey stuff on should be enough to push you firmly over the edge. Add in a brand-new story mode set over ten themed worlds and – more excitingly – a whole wealth of added extras like Monkey Rafting and Monkey Soccer, and this super-sequel

MORE-KEY



While the original quartet of Aiai, Meemee, Baby and Gongon are back, speculation is mounting that new characters will be added to the monkey melting pot. We've already seen an extra simian in the Monkey Target game, but there could be even more to come.



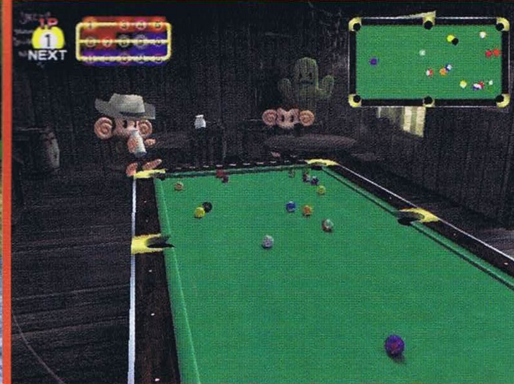
△ **Kittsy loved these. But especially the arenas where you got to punch.**

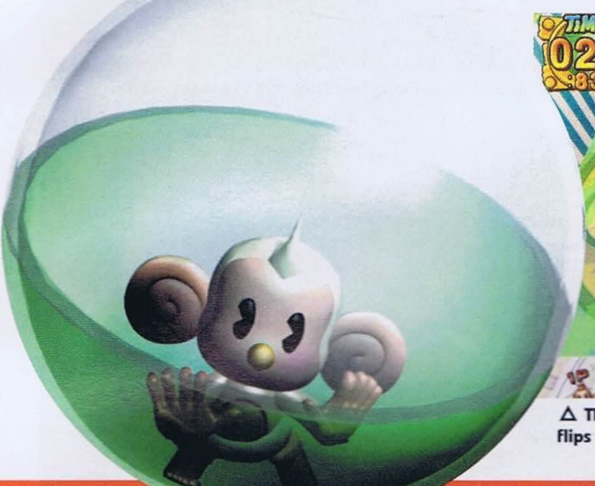
We get a monkey wrench on this Simian sequel

WET AND WILD

Rejoice at *Monkey Ball 2*'s all-new extras – football, parachuting, ten-pin bowling, pool, baseball and tennis. Boy oh boy. Best of all, though, has to be Monkey Rafting… and you thought monkeys and H20 didn't mix.



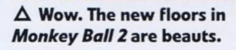






Δ This arena starts as a closed box – but as you hit the sides, it flips down and opens up to become a bigger, trickier play field.





Δ Wow. The new floors in *Monkey Ball 2* are beauts.



Δ It ain't the Zambezi, but it's tough going…

GREAT STORY Set over ten worlds, the story mode sees your monkey fooling around inside hidden islands, mechanical machines and even aquatic animals.



Δ Ah, yes – the return of Monkey Bowling. Each of the returning minigames has enjoyed a bit of an overhaul, but you should feel instantly at home with them.







BALL 2

is already starting to look like a whoooole lot of fun.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

The extra Monkey games are really what sets this release apart from its predecessor: Monkey Rafting is basic but brilliant fun, as is getting all kitted out for what amounts to a giant school sports day in Monkey Tennis, Monkey Baseball, Monkey Shot and Monkey Soccer. Our hopes for a Bare Knuckle Monkey Fighting mode were dashed, but everything else is very much in place in *Monkey Ball 2*.

If the new games aren't enough to get you salivating like a Terrier after too much Pedigree Chum, the news that all six of the original party games will be back in a souped-up style should impress. Of the ones we played, Monkey Target is particularly appetising, as it includes a fifth monkey joining the original quartet for some aerial high jinks.

> "THE REVELATION OF 150 ALL-NEW FLOORS SHOULD PUSH YOU FIRMLY OVER THE EDGE"

With the first *Super Monkey Ball* looking like it came straight out of a day-glo Shibuya arcade, it's no surprise to see that Amusement Vision have avoided the temptation to beef up the graphics into polygon-crunching territory. And why should they? What they have done, though, is to add an extreme sheen of slickness to the whole package, and gone to town on the creative front.

Of particular note was a level set inside a shark's mouth, with water splashing all around while you try to stabilise yourself on a metal cage…

NGC VERDICT

To be honest, this is pretty much the same as the first game. It feels the same, it looks the same, and it's got the same characters – the big difference is that it's got all new minigames (including the brilliant Monkey Football). If you look closely, you'll probably notice the slight graphical upgrade; the biggest difference in terms of visuals is the lush backgrounds, which are much more vibrant. Waterfalls spray mist and there are some amazing jungle environments, as well as interesting under-the-sea locations. To be honest, it can be a bit off-putting: while you're trying to master the new floors, you can't help but let your eyes wander around the gorgeous levels. All in all, more of the same – although it looks like being much harder too.

UK	US	JAPAN
XMAS	NOV	OCT

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- A little more diversity in the levels – towards the end of the first *Monkey Ball*, the floors all started to merge into one.
- More mid-level save points! The most frustrating part of the first game was making your way carefully across the floor and then tumbling off and having to restart the level again. Aaaaaaaargh!
- Better, more flexible camera controls.

ANTICIPATION RATING







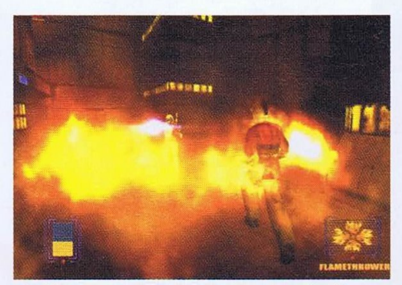



THE KNOWLEDGE

- Six unique worlds divided into a total of 18 levels.
- Over 100 different alien characters to interact with, capture and exterminate.
- *Zelda*-style lock-on to ensure accurate dual-pistol shootage.
- Voices and faces supplied by the real actors from the movie, including Temeura 'Jake The Muss' Morrison.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Star Wars Episode I Racer (NGC/30)**
  Blindingly quick, fantastic looking *Wipeout*-style racer based on the film's best scene.



△ Here's what happens when somebody spills Jango's pint. Short fuse, this bloke.



△ When targets hide out in shopping malls, Jango likes to get to a higher vantage point.



△ The weapon sound effects are all exactly like in the movie.



△ Sometimes it's just less hassle to bring 'em back in a body bag – or, in this case, a bucket.



△ Jango's 'spud gun' twin blasters are small but quite potent.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER

Play the galaxy's most feared and ruthless hired gun.



Music buffs will know of Django Reinhardt, a famously two-fingered gypsy guitarist, but by now half the world must know all about his near-namesake Jango Fett, the two-pistolled bounty hunter from Attack of the Clones.

> "MARVEL AT JANGO FETT'S EXTRAORDINARY CAPACITY FOR PHYSICAL VIOLENCE"

The game picks up Jango's story just before the events of the movie, and reveals exactly why he was chosen as the genetic basis for the clone army – more specifically, you'll be able to marvel at his extraordinary capacity for physical violence.

Most of the action is based around searching for the many fugitives and undesirables that flit from planet to planet, on the run from justice. Jango's job is to track them down and ship the target – or its corpse – back to whichever paymaster gave him the contract. Among his selection of handy tools are a scanner for tracking elusive victims and a wrist-mounted laser for cutting through any doors they might be hiding behind.

With a story told in cut-scenes designed by ILM, the movie FX wizards who created the spectacular visuals throughout the Star Wars series, it's one authentic looking tie-in.

NGC VERDICT

Bounty Hunter – like the other Star Wars game, *Clone Wars* – wasn't playable at E3, and LucasArts officials were keen to point out that there's still a fair way to go on development, suggesting this might not meet its proposed autumn release date. Still, from the shots, it's obvious a lot of time and effort has already been lavished on the look of the game; if you've seen the film, you'll note how impressively it mirrors the Coruscant levels. One to watch maybe.

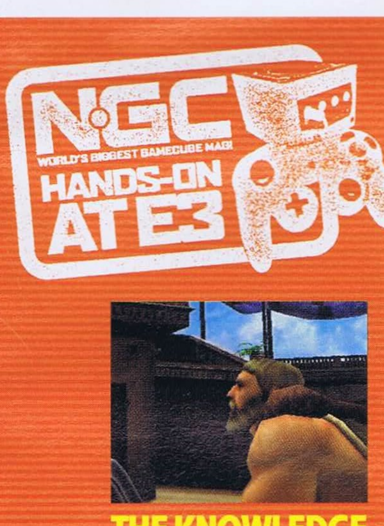


"LucasArts claim this will last upward of 70 hours"


△ The game draws obvious parallels with the film Gladiator, not least in terms of the massive, crowd-filled arenas.


△ Magic will play a big part in *Gladius* – though the big spells will have to be earned.

NGC WORLD'S BIGGEST GAMECUBE MAG! HANDS-ON AT E3

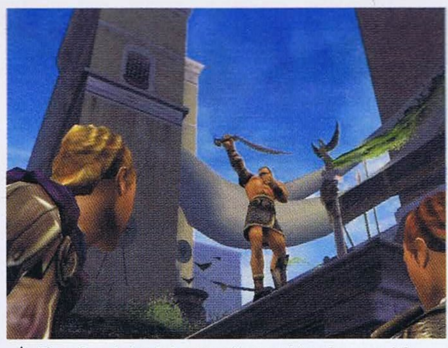


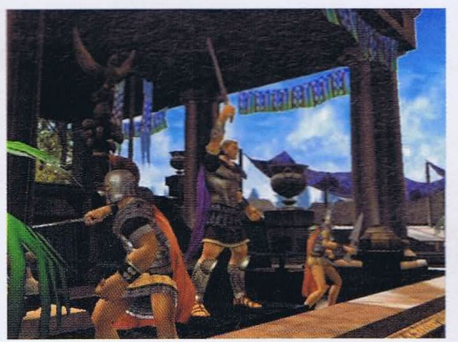
THE KNOWLEDGE

- A story-led, turn-based RPG.
- Over 70 hours of gameplay according to LucasArts, with the two main characters, Ursula and Valens, offering 35 hours each. Which adds up to 70.
- Train your Gladiator, learning new moves and progressing through each of the 20 arenas.
- Unique battle system incorporates 'swing meter', enabling players to gauge how effective their attacks are.
- 16 Gladiator types, including witches and, er, singers.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Shadows of the Empire (NGC/1)** Average first-person shooter.
- **Monkey Island 1-4 (Amiga, PC, Mac)** Superbly inventive, brilliantly funny point-'n'-click adventure.


△ The visuals look interesting and intricate, with meticlously designed Roman architecture. Nice.


△ Crowds can decide how scraps end up – if they're baying for blood, the Roman Emperors could join in.


△ Not all combatants are human – like this lil' beaut.

GLADIUS

Gladiator meets *Final Fantasy* in LucasArts' Roman rumble...

Although there's unlikely to be anything quite as gory – or squelchy – as the moment in Gladiator when Russell Crowe used two swords to halve one of his foes, LucasArts are promising large amounts of limb-lopping carnage in the potentially ace *Gladius*.

A strange concoction of action game and turn-based RPG, *Gladius* played intriguingly at E3, combining straightforward gladitorial battles with more traditional role-playing. It offered an incredible 400 weapons to choose from – the further you got, the more you gained access to – while the most interesting slant to the gameplay was the opportunity to customise and train your gladiator, turning him – or her – from weedy no-hoper into sword-swiping, kidney-punishing killing machine. In fact, the customisable freedom of *Gladius* was probably the element LucasArts were most keen to push. Gameplay is going to be pretty much restriction-free as, even during fights, you can choose between using turn-based battles and straightforward brawling.

All in all, though, this was looking extremely promising. Claims by the development team that this will last upward of 70 hours are bold – most likely that will be 70 hours once every last blade of pixelated grass has been covered. We rather suspect that it will settle in around the 35-40 hour mark.

Either way, *Gladius* looks to offer a unique combination of action game and RPG, all set against an appealing and violent backdrop.

NGC VERDICT

We like the look and feel of *Gladius* a lot. The decision to combine turn-based role-playing with more arcadey battles is a brave one, but the option to choose to go with either style during fights makes the option slightly redundant. One thing's for sure: this isn't the type of game that lends itself to a show like E3. You need to spend time with this, get into it, muck around with stats and tinker with the editing facility. We're looking forward to playing it more when we've got more time.





UK	US	JAPAN
2003	2003	TBA

ANTICIPATION RATING





ADVANCED FUN!
GT ADVANCE 2 RALLY RACING
STAR WARS
EPISODE II ATTACK OF THE CLONES
BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT
SPIRIT
STALLION OF THE CIMARRON
Search for Homeland
GAME BOY ADVANCE
THQ
Also available from THQ...
FILA DECATHLON
MONSTERS, INC.
motoGP
The Ripping Friends
www.gclub.net www.thq.com
THQ

"*Ace Golf* invents its own way of doing things"



△ The big question is whether these characters and that analogue control will be enough to persuade Gamecube players to choose *Ace Golf* above the forthcoming *Mario* effort. The two games are likely to launch within months of one another.



△ Sonny the biker has an unusual (for a golfer) 80s Hulk Hogan mullet.



△ Actually the mullet isn't unusual at all – big-hitter John Daly has one too.



△ Scatterbrained Lisa forgot to put on her shirt before popping out for a round. Luckily the bra and combats look is tipped to be the next big thing in golf circles.



△ Looks like a gameshow host, swings like a lord. Erm, a golf lord.



△ Easy does it when lining up a putt using the analogue control method.

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING HANDS-ON PLAYTEST

ACE GOLF

Pachinko specialists chip in with an ace in the hole.



Golf games have barely evolved since the days of *Leaderboard* for the Commodore 64. The graphics might be a bit nicer these days, but the old 'swing meter' gameplay remains much the same. The rare attempts to change the formula, such as *Cyber Tiger* or *Glory of St Andrews* for the N64, have been uninspiring to say the least.

Ace Golf is the latest clubhouse upstart to abandon convention and invent its own way of doing things – but this time it's tailored specifically for the Gamecube controller. It uses the main analogue stick to aim and look around, with the C-stick used as a kind of virtual club.

Yes, it sounds very much like *Cyber Tiger*, but developers Telenet claim that their system actually works and is intuitive enough to become second-nature after a short time. So, no more squinting at the screen, trying to stop a fast-moving power bar on a pixel-thin line. Hopefully.

The super-deformed characters make the game look similar to the hit *Hot Shots Golf* series for PlayStation or (whisper it) Mario's own stroll down the fairways. If *Ace Golf* proves to be as much fun to play as either of those, it might just prove to be the Sergio Garcia to *Mario Golf GC*'s Tiger Woods. A tall order, but the great thing about Gamecube is that anything seems possible right now.

THE KNOWLEDGE

- You can choose from 14 golfers and six different caddies. Six courses, ranging from the Nevada deserts to the English countryside, four match modes and a variety of minigames complete the line-up.
- Winning tournaments earns money to upgrade your golf gear. To prevent this giving an unfair advantage in multiplayer games, an equaliser option evens out the skill levels.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Parlor Pro 64 (N64, not reviewed)**

Telenet's 1999 pachinko sim didn't make it to this country, and the more recent *Slot Pro Advance* also looks destined to remain in Japan. Where it belongs, frankly.

NGC VERDICT

Why have so few golf games innovated with new control systems? Hundreds of golf sims in, nobody has improved on the original format, and almost every attempt to change it has been memorable for the wrong reasons. Trying to judge the strength of your shots with the tiny amount of play in an analogue stick is very tough, and games like *Cyber Tiger* also offered a more useful standard control option. It'll be interesting to see how this attempt works out.



UK	US	JAPAN
AUTUMN	AUTUMN	TBA

ANTICIPATION RATING: 3





△ Eye, eye: Cyclops has full access to his laser-filled orbs.





△ That's an impressive amount of splittage from Phoenix.



△ Storm plainly doesn't shop in Marks and Sparks for her undies. Toad feels the full force here.

THE KNOWLEDGE

- Full 3D, eight-way movement.
- Eight huge levels with 26 sub-sections, plus destructible scenery. A bit like *Dead or Alive*.
- More than 20 X-Men to choose from, including Wolverine, Beast and Storm – plus X-Men enemies like Toad.
- Story and Versus modes, as well as a two-player face off.
- Bullet-time-style fight freezes.

THIS LOT ALSO DID…

- **Ghost in the Shell (PlayStation)**
  Enjoyable, if flawed, driver-cum-adventure, based on the fantastic animated movie.



△ Fan of the comic? Beast will also sport his blue 'outfit'.



△ Costumes aplenty, but still the same killer moves – Magneto gets it from Storm. Nice.



△ Mystique could be interesting if she works in the same way as Kirby in *Smash Bros*…

X-MEN NEXT DIMENSION



It's Wolverine versus Mystique… and everyone's invited.

If you're familiar with the pretty fantastic *Dead or Alive* series – particularly the latest installment on Xbox – then you'll feel right at home playing this X-Men beat-'em-up, seemingly carved from the same piece of code as Tecmo's bouncy 3D fighter.

> "X-MEN IS A BEAT-'EM-UP SEEMINGLY CARVED FROM THE SAME PIECE OF CODE AS DOA3"

With eight-direction movement, destructible scenery, side stepping and lightning-fast counters, this will feel immediately familiar to age-old *DoA* campaigners. As will the level structures, which are pretty much open-ended as they extend over platforms set at different heights.

Sounds good. As does the fact that there are 26 characters to choose from – a nice mix too, with Beast, Phoenix and Sabretooth squaring up opposite Wolverine, Storm and Cyclops. There's even room for a few guest characters, including Sentinel.

The most interesting aspect of the game is likely to be the way in which the characters get to use their super powers: Mystique, for example, is plainly going to be *Next Dimension*'s answer to Kirby, taking on the appearance of other characters to confuse her foes. More soon…

NGC VERDICT

X-Men plainly has a long, long way to go. The E3 version was lacking in a number of areas: there were only three playable characters, the moves list was tiny, and the visuals were bland. However, there were some nice ideas too: the arenas are large, and providing the game gives you enough freedom of movement, these could offer something different to the other fighters out there at the mo. That said, this isn't likely to give *Smash Bros* many sleepless nights.



UK NOV | US SEPT | JAPAN UNLIKELY

ANTICIPATION RATING

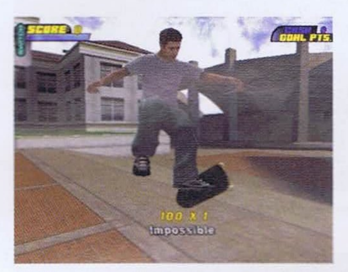
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Four times old, but still able to grind out a result

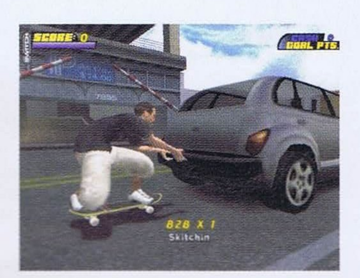


△ The new structure really makes for a different experience in this fourquel. One of the best parts of the previous games was when you weren't being timed.





△ The moves list has been expanded, although not all were available at E3.



△ Neversoft promise a massive list of secrets too. We'd like Yoda on a board.

△ The game has undergone some nifty visual tweaks, with better, more detailed backgrounds and smoother objects and ramps in the park. The framerate is better too – you might recall it glitched a bit in *Tony Hawk's 3*. Here, it's super-smooth.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

Skate stuff! All the details on the Hawkster's new outing…

We all knew there would be a new *Tony Hawk's*. What we didn't know was that it would undergo some radical changes on its appearance at E3.

First off, the traditional two-minute run that made up the other game's levels will be disbanded for number four, and replaced by a free skate approach. Now, instead of having to complete objectives in under 120 seconds, you can whip around the parks at your own pace.

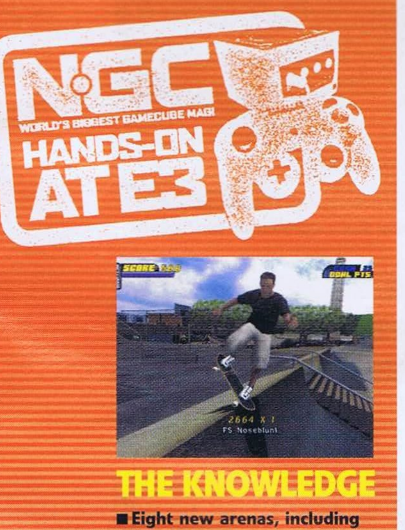
Secondly, there are no competition levels now. Instead, you'll bump into similarly baggy-trousered skaters, who will challenge you to beat their high scores. If this sounds dull, worry not: when you accept a skateboard challenge, it'll add new ramps to the levels, expanding them out and about. These increasingly interactive areas make up a large part of the new *Tony Hawk's*.

The evolving nature of the new arenas means in-game objects that change location can be skated on to gain access to further areas. Each level starts out looking surprisingly barren. To bring the environment up to fully skateable status, you need to unlock certain areas and objects by – you guessed it – winning money. This approach means there's far more to discover than in previous games.

The third change is that there are now minigames, including the chance to partake in a spot of tennis. Only with your board as a bat. Again, success at these rewards you with some cold hard greenbacks.

Add in eight new skate parks, including revised LA and Rio levels plus new Tokyo and, er, Liverpool arenas, and things are looking good.

NGC WORLD'S BIGGEST GAMECUBE MAG HANDS-ON AT E3



THE KNOWLEDGE

- Eight new arenas, including new versions of Rio and LA.
- No time limit – skateboard around for as long as you want.
- No competition mode. Instead, meet up with fellow 'boarders and enter hi-score challenges.
- Interactive arenas that 'evolve' as you skate around.
- Loads of new moves.

THIS LOT ALSO DID…

- **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 (NGC/67)** Great threequel for Hawker. Shame it's a PS2 conversion.
- **Spider-Man (PlayStation)** Used the *Tony Hawk* engine, bizarrely. Wasn't very good.

NGC VERDICT

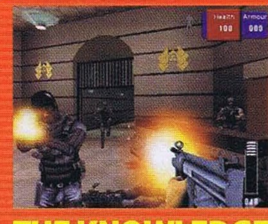
Tony Hawk's 4 has got to be one of the biggest surprises of the show: we went in expecting to see much of the same, and came out rejoicing at the changes – especially the fact that you've no longer got time limits. Admittedly, the actual feel of the game is similar, and the skate parks, although bigger, bear some resemblance to what has gone before. But the bar has been raised in terms of graphics, and the controls feel tighter and more responsive now. All in all, great stuff.



UK 2003 | US 2003 | JAPAN UNLIKELY

ANTICIPATION RATING: 4





THE KNOWLEDGE

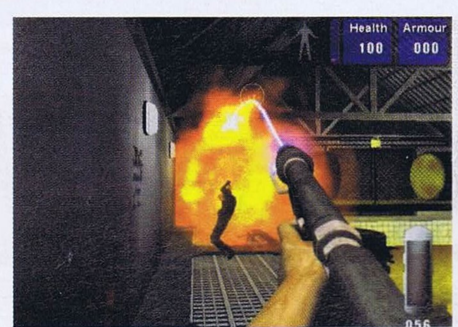
- Become John McClane in an all-new Die Hard adventure.
- 11 levels of stealth action.
- A 'disguise menu': pick up different outfits in order to get closer to your enemies.
- Context-sensitive speech that kicks in depending on what costume you've pulled on.
- Stacks of guns, splashes of blood and swear words.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **R-Type DX (NGC/33)**
One of the best shoot-'em-ups on the Game Boy Color – absolutely rock-hard as well.



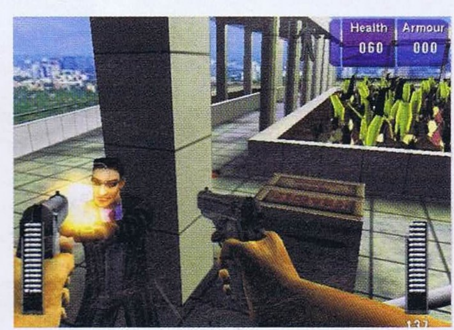
After ventilating this creep, it would be great if you could hang him on one of those tuna hooks, send him off to the cannery, then buy him at a corner shop later on.



Bruce Willis never torched anybody in the movies.



Shoot first, use stealth later. That's our motto.



You should scream like a madman as you do this.



DIE HARD VENDETTA

Don the vest, shout the f-words, it's time to take out terrorists...

John McLane's daughter has been kidnapped. And he's not exactly happy about it. Not at all. In fact, he's so mad that he's resorted to spitting out swear words. We're talking the F-word. In a *Nintendo* game, for goodness sake.

Bits Studios' *Die Hard Vendetta* is, in a word, brilliant. The game, which makes you negotiate your way stealthily through 11 levels of first-person shooting action to save your kid, is ingeniously structured: weaponry is scattered liberally around the place, meaning you have to use your head as well as your fists and trigger finger. A little bit.

That doesn't mean there ain't stuff to fire. Everything from handguns to shotguns and grenades are available. Successful sniper shots and the firing of the last bullet in your chamber cause the camera to go all Matrix-style, slowing down and circling the victim's head, while there's even some double-handed Uzi action to be found for twin-barrel blasting.

The game settings include a subway station at night and an art museum, while out on the street you can disguise yourself as a tramp. Once you're dressed down, it's possible to grab a bad-guy leader from behind in a choke hold, and order his henchmen to put down their weapons – or say goodbye to their talisman. If you're holding their leader, they're likely to comply. Get the wrong person, though, and ooh.

NGC VERDICT

Control in *Die Hard* is based around the *GoldenEye* set-up, with the analogue stick moving Brucey around, and the L button being used for targeting. Ingeniously, the game also includes an automatic jump button. What does this mean? Well, when you add in stuff like the fact that you can take hostages, Matrix-style bullet time effects, context-sensitive speech, guts, guns and naughty words, you've got one hell of a game. This is going to be top – yippee-kai-ay!



UK NOV | US NOV | JAPAN UNLIKELY

ANTICIPATION RATING 4


△ Hiding like this has little to do with stealth. It's mainly for reloading.


△ Disco chop-socky time. We'll send in the attack dog to clean up the remains.



△ Looks like the perfect setting for a high-kicking, Matrix-style martial arts rumble. You bring the wrongdoers, we'll bring the justice.

DEAD TO RIGHTS

Bang stick battery, Namco-style.

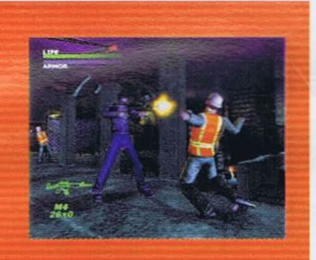
This blood-splattered shooter looks brilliant. Coming over like *Max Payne* meets *Winback* in a dark alley – except ten times better than both – this is a trip to the seedier side of town with an array of heavy-duty weaponry tossed in for good measure. Nice recipe.

You play Jack Slate ('a good cop in a bad city') on a mission to avenge his dad's death. Just as the investigation starts, he's framed for murder.

Determined to create a film-like atmosphere on a console, Namco have hired the services of Hollywood screenwriters and musicians to work on the game. So as you wander the back streets of Grant City, expect Hong Kong action movie fights to break out on street corners.

Being that Jack Slate is equipped with over a dozen moves, from disarming enemies to rolling and running, the prospect of taking the law into your own hands is a tantalising one; you'll be lobbing petrol bombs and shooting them down in flames over enemies' heads one second, then flattening yourself against a wall and swinging round a corner to deliver some stylish 9mm justice the next. Or you could just send in your faithful mutt, Shadow, to maul an enemy and steal their weapon for you. Cowardly, but cool.

There's also plenty of the old bullet time effect from The Matrix, and more than enough gritty set-pieces to keep you busy when it's released. And did we mention the multiplayer minigames…? Time to get excited.





THE KNOWLEDGE

- You play Jack Slate, who's looking for his father's killer.
- There's *Max Payne* or Matrix-style slo-mo when Jack takes down his foes.
- Proper script, put together by Hollywood hacks. *Dead to Rights* is ready to offer the best story-driven game ever made.
- Being developed by Namco US – it's the most ambitious project they've ever undertaken.
- Masses of guns, petrol bombs, and a nasty pet dog, Shadow, that you can set on enemies.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Soul Calibur (Dreamcast)** Top-drawer fighting action – the sequel is lined up for Cube.
- **Ridge Racer series (PlayStation/PlayStation 2)** Watch out for the next game in the *Ridge* series on Cube.

NGC VERDICT

This'll hit Xbox before it hits the Cube – shunting the release back to 2003 – but the wait should be worth it. Namco are readying an astonishing thriller, packed with ingenious set-pieces and stylish scripting. In fact, this promises to follow in the steps of plot-heavy winners like *Shadowman* and *Metal Gear Solid*, with a perfect balance between words and action. We simply can't wait to get our hands on *Dead to Rights* – it's just a shame we have to wait so long.



UK	US	JAPAN
2003	2003	2003

ANTICIPATION RATING 4



RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC

You knew he'd be back…

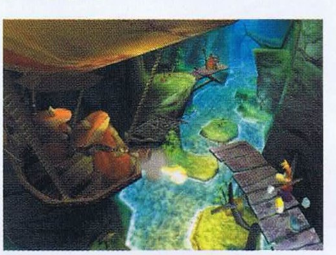


France's biggest game hero returns with a new, slightly darker than normal platformer. In *Hoodlum Havoc*, Ray's traditional brightly coloured landscapes are replaced with sinister levels that have been plunged into badness by the evil Hoodlums and their, erm, Dark Lums.

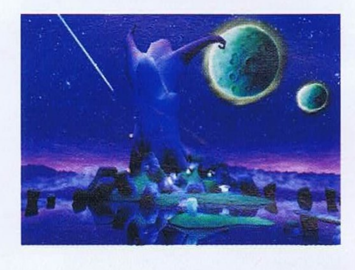
In addition to the usual swinging and jumping, there's a level called Special Invaders, in which Ray flies a speeding jet bike through twisty tunnels, shooting down bad guys.

Ray can also upgrade his standard abilities by collecting powerups such as a helicopter backpack and a little grappling hook, and he can turn into metal – like Mario did in 1996.

The graphics are slick and detailed, and from what we've seen so far, it isn't as unfairly hard as *Rayman 2*.



△ **Rayman will swing onto your Gamecube around autumn time.**



NGC FIRST EVER PICS!

Fantastic shots direct from LA! Look at 'em and weep – your humble GBA really is doing this…

YOSHI'S ISLAND

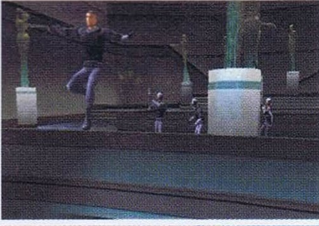
SNES magic hits Advance…



If you never played this genius SNES platformer, then you missed out on one of the 16-bit era's finest moments: a game so crammed with wonderful touches it could only come from Nintendo.

Remember the dastardly Kamek, who graced our Evolution feature in last month's Compendium? The little blue nutter – along with Baby Bowser – has kidnapped Luigi, leaving Yoshi the task of guiding himself and Baby Mario through the game's stunning crayon-scrawled levels in an attempt to rescue his baby brother. Brilliant.

So, where do we start? Simply, *Yoshi's Island* was the best 2D platformer Nintendo ever wheeled out – so good in fact that even the follow-up, *Yoshi's Story*, couldn't do for it. Stashed with secrets, packed with brilliant moments, and replete with Yoshi's ace egg-spitting, it had masses of replayability too thanks to an inspired star, coin and flower-collecting feature. Bring it on.





MINORITY REPORT

Getting arrested for a crime you have yet to commit is as harsh as making a 'revolutionary' film inspired by Van Bam's Timecop is cheeky.

But this third-person adventure from *Spider-Man* developers Treyarch should put the record straight.

The game follows future rozzer Detective Anderton, as he aims to clear his name after being accused by his own colleagues in the thought police. Time-twisting criminal conundrums will be the order of the day this winter.

SMUGGLERS RUN WARZONES

Featuring some of the largest environments we've seen in any game, let alone a racing title, *Smugglers Run: Warzones* lets you drive over mile after mile of detailed terrain on a mission to smuggle contraband and avoid the ever-present cops on your tail.

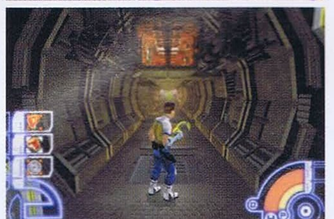
It's an update of the PlayStation 2 sequel, with reduced loading times and sightly crisper graphics, and the collect-and-deliver gameplay is a bit like *Crazy Taxi*, except on on a truly massive scale. Look out for this one in the autumn.





RTX RED ROCK





That's RTX as in Radical Tactics eXpert, of course. And Red Rock is mankind's first Martian colony, which is due to come under alien attack around 100 years from now.

Playing RTX Eugene Wheeler, you must explore Red Rock's labyrinths, find survivors and repel the invaders. Aiding you in your mission is a sentient computer called Iris, which can be used to take control of various robots and other machines, in a *Grim Fandango* meets *Tomb Raider* quest.

ETERNAL DARKNESS



At long last it's complete. Well, the E3 version looked done and dusted anyway, and you should be able to pick up an import copy on 24th June.

The control method for this survival horror adventure feels better than the normal *Resident Evil* type – particularly the weapons targeting, which allows you to chop or shoot individual body parts and switch between several enemies, all using just the right shoulder button.

We'll soon be able to find out if it really is worth its 70 hours of play.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

More GBA genius from Nintendo…





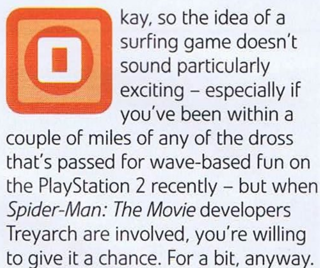
Nintendo's brilliance wasn't just reserved for the Cube. Their first *Zelda* game for GBA is equally inspired, not only updating the SNES classic *A Link to the Past*, but also sticking in a new Link adventure, *Four Swords*, where up to four players get to play simultaneously, collecting and exchanging items, as well as turning on their mates at will. A unique combination of team play and backstabbing, this is going to be ace.





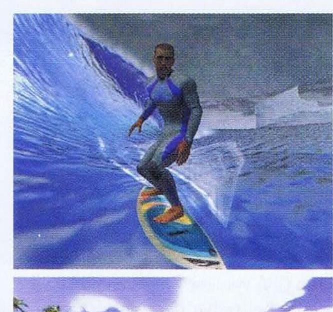
KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER

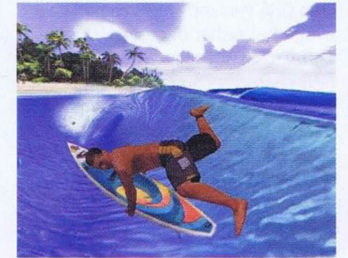
From the makers of *Tony Hawk* comes a watery wonderland…



Okay, so the idea of a surfing game doesn't sound particularly exciting – especially if you've been within a couple of miles of any of the dross that's passed for wave-based fun on the PlayStation 2 recently – but when *Spider-Man: The Movie* developers Treyarch are involved, you're willing to give it a chance. For a bit, anyway.

The idea of a story-based mode is interesting, but at the end of the day this is pretty much *Tony Hawk's* on water, which is just fine by us. It hasn't got the same feel to the stunts, but you can still pull off a variety of interesting manoeuvres, and even enter them in your Surf Log Book, where you can compare surfer stats. Should make for great reading.









PHANTASY STAR ONLINE 1 AND 2

It's the Cube's first online game.



At their press conference on the Tuesday before E3, Nintendo were proud to announce that Sega's *Phantasy Star Online* would spearhead their online strategy in the US and Japan. What about here, you're probably asking. Well, until the UK gets up and running with broadband properly, The Big N were understandably less keen to commit to Blighty, although sources told us that it would come out here.

The result is a decent offline RPG, but a masterful online team game, which you'll have to feed through a disappointingly slow 56k modem until everyone here gets in broadband.

Still, from what we've seen, this should still be worth investigating, especially the unique team dynamic. Oh, and there's also the bonus of a mini version of Saturn classic *NiGHTs* you can transfer to your GBA...



△ This could be great – if only all UK homes were equipped with broadband.





ECKS VS SEVER 2

Brilliant GBA sequel in the bag!





Crawfish have got to be one of the best third-party GBA developers out there at the mo – and this first-person shooter only goes to prove it, with 24 eye-blistering levels, huge weapons like tazers, shotguns and player guided homing missiles. There'll also be better gadgets, such as infra-red goggles, aqualungs and jet packs.

Lordy.

This is going to be the tastiest GBA shooter ever, you mark our words.







BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS

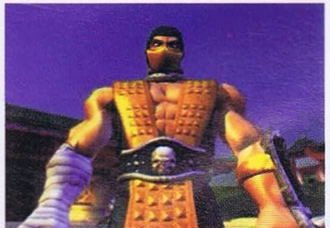
E3 was the first time we'd played *Bomberman Generations* for a while and, from what we saw, Hudson might be onto something. A great multiplayer return for the brilliant SNES-style four-player mode was one thing, but even the cel-shaded one-player was looking pretty smart.

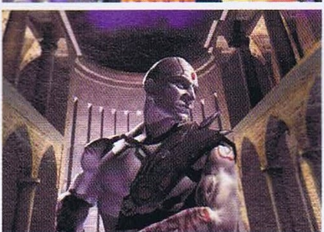
We'll reserve judgement on the single-player mode, though, until we get to spend a bit more time with it; but this is definitely looking a whole lot better than the crud we had to put up with on the N64. The rancid *Bomberman Hero* comes to mind...

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE

Try to forget about the sickeningly crap GBA version. This is more like the altogether rather decent *Mortal Kombat 4*, with spruced-up graphics, new characters and new fatalities.

You can now see visible damage to the fighters during a scrap as their faces get bruised and bloodied. It's quicker and more responsive than previous instalments, and while it won't challenge *Soul Calibur 2*, it's the only game where you can rip limbs.









TOP GUN
COMBAT ZONES

It might have nothing at all to do with Top Gun the movie, but this is a surprisingly enjoyable flight sim.

It's split into three eras, from the Korean war to the present day, with different levels of technology in each. You fly academy missions before heading out to the combat zones, and attempt to rack up medal-winning bonus points by pulling spectacular moves, passing within inches of buildings, or pummelling enemies with 'no mercy' shots. It also caters for novice pilots as well as experts.

We'll review it in a month or two.

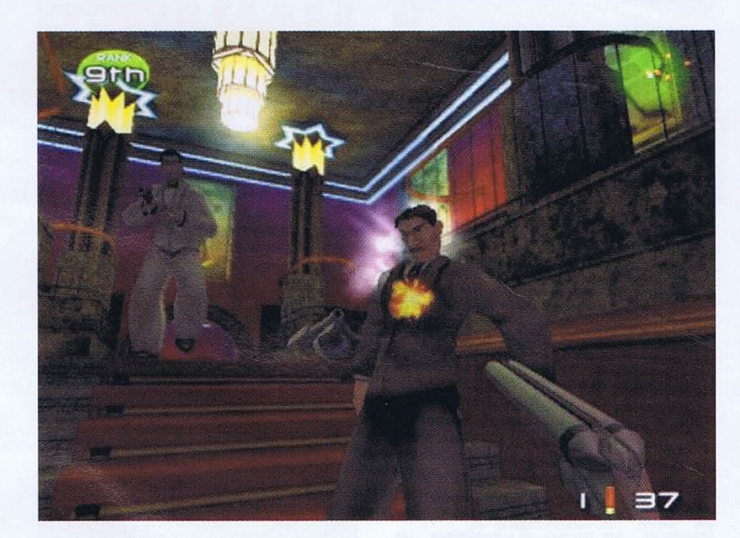
ROBOTECH BATTLECRY





Who remembers *Robotech*, the utterly appalling N64 space shooter that was so rank even developers Gametek couldn't face releasing it?

Well, forget that – we hope – because *Robotech* is back, cel-shaded and ready to rumble in altogether more impressive form. Plainly, this is a game that's going to require some time spent on it in terms of playing hours, but already it's looking very pleasant, with some interesting battles, and a feel that fans of the anime should find very pleasing. We'll have to see how this develops.



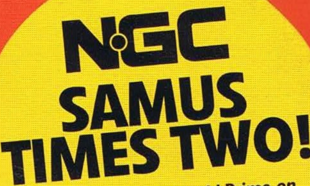
TIME SPLITTERS 2



This is going to be great, especially because it bears more than a passing resemblance to all things *GoldenEye*.

More detail on this next month.

METROID FUSION



SAMUS TIMES TWO!

Like the look of Metroid Prime on Gamecube? Then get ready for more Samus in this GBA original...

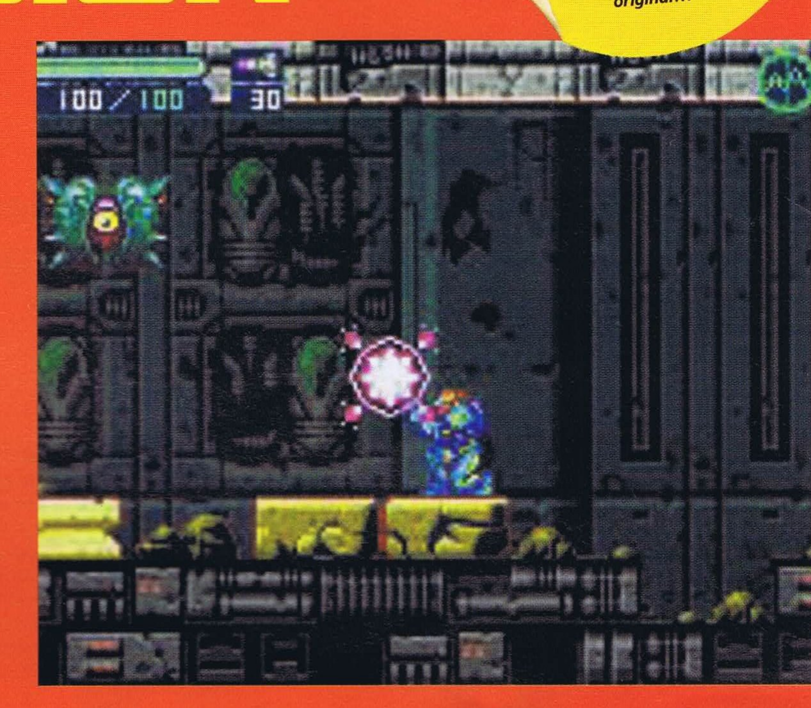


No, it's not the SNES conversion that we thought might turn up but, in fact, a whole new adventure featuring even more from the body-suited gun-nut.

With a great story concerning Samus' attempts to see off a parasitic bug called – get this – X, *Metroid Fusion* moves amazingly and looks even better, singing at every new area. As in the 3D *Metroid* outing, Samus rolls up into a ball, but here it can be used for more than just moving from one area to the next – in a part we played, she used her new form to beat down a closed door.

Weapons-wise, things have changed a bit from the SNES games, with all-new bang sticks to parade, but there will also be the opportunity to collect classic guns, including many that made *Super Metroid* so blinking great.

This'll be a reeeeeal winner.





DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR

NGC BRAND NEW PICS!

First new shots for ages – we get to grips with Disney's new Mickey Mouse game on da Cube...

Capcom reveal their new Mickey Mouse game. Excited?



Uh huh. We remain to be convinced of just whether this is any good or not – especially if what we played at E3 was anything to go by – but *Disney's Magical Mirror featuring Mickey Mouse* is certainly visually very nice: great reflections in the floor, nice detail on Mickey, spanking locations... whether the gameplay side of things can do the business, we'll have to see. Certainly, walking round solving fairly pedestrian puzzles as the world's most irritating cartoon character ain't going to do it for people still settling down from seeing *Zelda* in action.









X-MEN WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

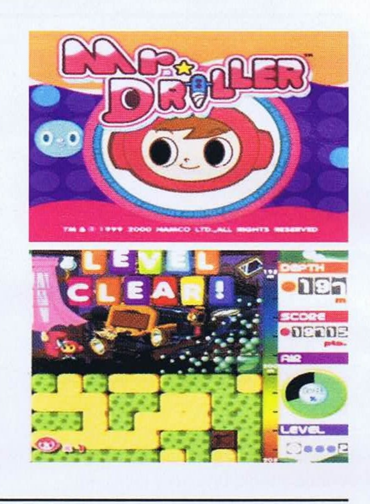
Wolverine gets his own game and takes on the world – as usual – in this enjoyable 3D adventure. Even though it's further along on other formats for no good reason, this still looked interesting, with Wolverine's claws adding some interesting gameplay twists, including the ability to lift enemies up and toss them across rooms. Would be nice if you could stick the blades right in there, though.

MR DRILLER

Namco's burrowing space dude arrives on Gamecube for more of the usual (and very popular) puzzle fun.

This time up to four players can compete to remove the coloured blocks, all on the same screen. The camera zooms out to accomodate the action, so a giant TV is a must if you want to play against friends without making your eyes burst from squinting at the tiny characters.

It hooks up with the forthcoming GBA sequel too, and it's always great to see third-parties making use of the link between the two machines. Expect a UK release next year.





LMA MANAGER

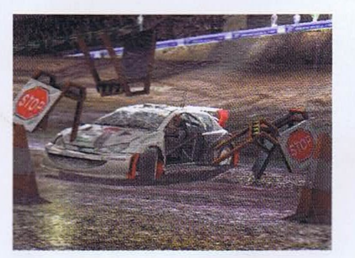
Formerly a PlayStation/PS2 exclusive, *LMA Manager 2003* will be bringing its high-quality brand of in-depth football management to Gamecube next year.

It features every single player from every European league, so unless you refuse to support anyone other than your local pub team, you'll find your favourites in there somewhere, with up-to-date strips and line-ups.

Lineker and Hansen provide the analysis, and there's a respectable 3D engine for showing highlights. Result!

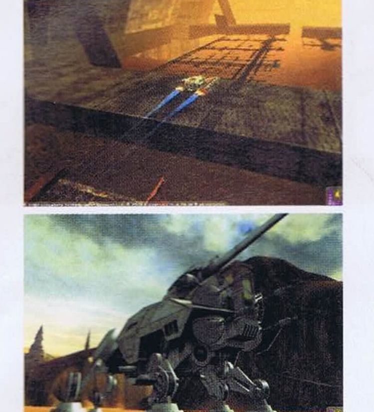
RALLY FUSION

Drive 20 off-road rally cars, including Mitsubishis, Toyotas, Lancias and Peugeots; career across 20 different tracks including snowy wastelands and forests; take on the best drivers in the world – basically, this is going to be your alternative to *Colin McRae*. And it's actually looking very tidy.



Especially tasty are the physics, which can greatly affect the performance of your car in your race against time.

One to watch, maybe.



STAR WARS CLONE WARS

Another day, another Star Wars licence. Alongside their newies like *Gladius* and *Full Throttle 2*, LucasArts are still putting faith in these sure-fire money-spinners. And why not?

Clone Wars wasn't playable at E3, but is likely to be along the lines of *Rogue Leader*, except this time we're being invited to enjoy ground-based missions too. There's also going to be more RTS-style tactics involved. Interestingly, you can control one of three players: Anakin, Obi-Wan or Mace Windu. Look for more soon…

TALES OF PHANTASIA





Namco's RPG wasn't playable at E3, but we sneaked these shots out without incurring the wrath of ninja-suited Japanese businessmen. Phew.

Little is known about how this is going to work, but we managed to get a gander at a video and it seemed to move nicely, with plenty of people to chat to. Not much evidence of the battle system, and visually this isn't going to win any awards – it looks like a slightly beefed-up SNES game, to be perfectly frank – but at least Namco are up and at 'em.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2: EO

Feel it! Geraint's favourite ever beat-'em-up is looking reeeal nice.

NGC PLAYED IT TO BITS!

Damn right we have – we love this game, and you're going to love it more than a really fluffy kitten.



Oh yeah. This little beauty is shaping up to be the ultimate 2D fighter. With stacks of moves, loads of Capcom and SNK characters (including newies), plus a revolutionary C-stick-activated special moves list, we couldn't stop playing this. Until we got back to *Zelda*.

The use of the analogue L and R buttons was nice too, with the pressure you apply determining the strength of your attack. Impressive.





MEDAL OF HONOR



You're going to love this: PS2 owners have been bleating about this fantastic WW2 first-person shooter for yonks – and now we've got it too. It's scheduled to arrive early next year, but who cares when you get to take out Nazis, fire Lugers and climb over tanks in an attempt to take out Axis aircraft. Simply put, this is terrific.

Not playable at E3, unfortunately, but we did get to spend a little time with the PS2 version. EA were at pains to tell us that the Gamecube version would look a hell of a lot better, and there might even be some extra stuff, though we're not counting on that.

Either way, this is going to be another fine shooter to add to Cube's already extensive collection. We'll go to war soon. Er, not real war. Well, maybe. But probably not.



△ World War Two: what a great setting for a bit of bullet-based action.





OUR PROMISE
We've spent years securing the biggest and best contacts inside the world's most important companies. Our news is properly sourced, thoroughly researched, and expertly written. You can trust what you read here – that's why Newsdesk is the best magazine news service on Planet Earth.

IN NEWS THIS MONTH

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FREE AS A BIRD
WAVEBIRD HITS THE US OF A P50

NINTENDO'S US MODEM
INFO STOP! P50

PLUS!
- The Matrix!
- F-Zero GC!
- Er… Knight Rider!

& MORE!

LETTER FROM AMERICA



△ Part of Nintendo's huge stand, heaving with games. People could win a Wavebird here.

A LOOK AT THE STATE OF PLAY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC, AS NINTENDO STORMS THE ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO… BY GERAINT EVANS

The games industry's annual get-together at the E3 show in Los Angeles is where all the big hitters and major players gather to show off their forthcoming titles and check out the competition, and is widely regarded as the best possible barometer for anyone who wants to predict how the balance of console power will be shifting over the next year or so.

If that's the case then Nintendo are heading for a very positive 12 months, thanks to the companys strongest games line-up in a very long time. Under a huge banner reading 'Gaming Giants', Nintendo almost stole the show 24 hours before it actually kicked off, with a pre-E3 press conference in which Shigeru Miyamoto strolled through the audience while playing *Super Mario Sunshine* to demonstrate the new Wavebird wireless controller.

The Legend of Zelda for Gamecube was also shown, to rapturous applause, before Miyamoto was joined on stage by senior game creators from Nintendo development partners Namco, Sega and Capcom for a quick spot of four-player *Zelda* on Game Boy Advance.

Keen to emphasise the many famous characters and franchises that will only be playable on Nintendo machines, titles such as *Metroid Prime*, *F-Zero*, *Starfox Adventures*, and *Wario World* were also shown on video, along with lesser lights such as *Animal Crossing*, *Mario Party 4* and *Eternal Darkness*, plus Capcom's *Resident Evil Zero*.

When E3 eventually opened its doors, the contents of most competitors' displays were comparatively disappointing by Nintendo's standards.

△ Four of the most important men in videogames enjoying a bit of *Zelda*.

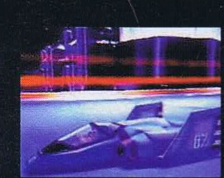
RARE WHERE?

The most notable absentee at this year's E3 was, sadly, and rather predictably, Rare. Only the near-complete *Starfox Adventures* was shown on Nintendo's own stand, and titles such as *Kameo* and *Donkey Kong Racing* are no longer appearing on any official release lists. It seems increasingly likely that the company will be converting any properties which do not include Nintendo-owned characters (*Kameo, Perfect Dark* and a monkey-free *Donkey Kong Racing*) to other consoles.

F-ZERO GC

Sega's interpretation of the original future racing series got an E3 outing on video, looking fast and detailed. More next month!









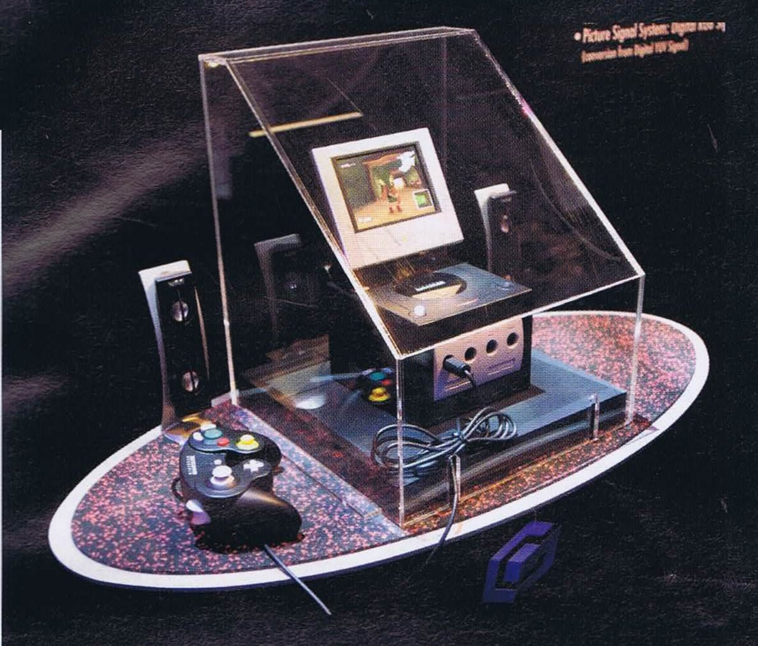

BIG KNIGHT OUT
Rubbish 80s action series Knight Rider is getting its own game on GC. Developed by Davilex (who did the so-so London Racer on PC), the game puts you in the seat of camp talking supercar KITT – possibly in the form of the bemulleted Hoff-meister himelf! More as we get it.

EYE EYE, NINTENDO
The successor to the Game Boy Camera was shown at E3. The Game Eye is a



WHO ARE WE? This month's news is researched and written by Tim Weaver, Martin Kitts, Dan Geary and a jetlagged Geraint Evans.

PORTABLE GAMECUBE!



Nintendo's answer to third-party mobile monitors.

Here's a surprise from the Nintendo stand – an official add-on 5-inch screen that produces a pin-sharp image thanks to its built-in RGB connection. Third-party screens use a lower-quality AV connector, and the difference is the same as that you get from using Nintendo's expensive high-quality RGB Scart cable rather than the basic AV lead that comes bundled with the Gamecube.

It's only a prototype at the moment, so no release date or pricing details were mentioned, and there's no word on whether the funky speakers shown here will be included as part of the porta-cube package.



△ One very good reason why you should book a long holiday in October…





△ …followed by another around February of next year (hopefully).



△ As ever, Shigeru Miyamoto was Nintendo's star turn at E3.

That's not to say that those games will *never* happen on Gamecube – just that 'multi' and 'format' are the buzzwords at Twycross right now. And naturally, 'no' and 'comment' were among two of the words Nintendo gave us when asked about the situation.

> **"MIYAMOTO STROLLED THROUGH THE AUDIENCE, PLAYING MARIO WITH A WAVEBIRD CONTROLLER"**

PRICE WAR

Over in the States, the console price war is becoming more ruthless every month. In May Sony responded to Microsoft's $200 Xbox by reducing the retail price of PlayStation 2 to the same level. Nintendo promptly hacked $50 off Gamecube, sending the console tumbling to a mere $150 – a little over £100.

Despite Sony boss Kaz Hirai declaring: "The console wars are over. I liken the gap with our competition to the Grand Canyon," the cutthroat battle is widely expected to become nastier still, when one of the three players takes the potentially devastating step of reducing the cost of software rather than simply offering the console for less cash.

At the moment, each manufacturer is losing a considerable amount of money for each console sold – in Microsoft's case, more considerable than most. According to the last available analyst estimates, an Xbox costs close to $400 to produce, with Gamecube weighing in at around $220.

All three companies make their money through software sales, which is why game prices have remained so consistently high. But at the time of going to press, rumours suggested that a pre-emptive software price-cut announcement from either Sony or Nintendo is very much on the cards.

THE BRIGHT SIDE

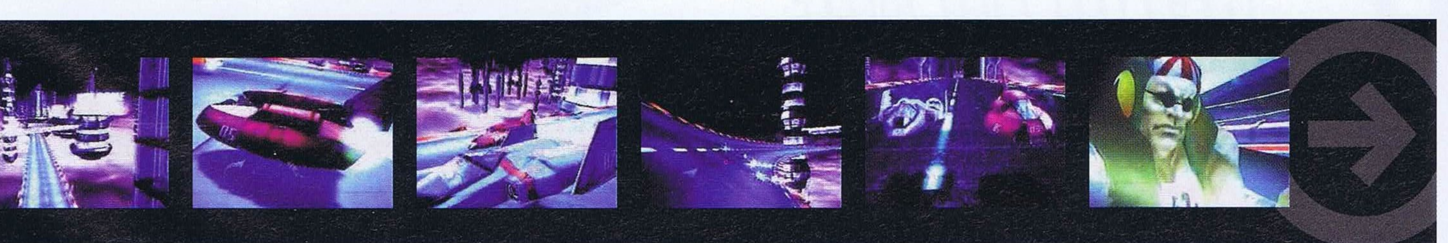
Whatever happens, the next year or so is going to be a great time to own a games console – unless, of course, you happen to buy one just before the next round of price cuts.

Naturally, our money's on Gamecube. There was simply nothing on the Sony and Microsoft stands at E3 that could compare to *Super Mario Sunshine*, *Legend of Zelda* and *Metroid Prime*. Plus a large proportion of the biggest third-party stuff, such as *Dead to Rights*, *Jedi Knight II*, *Colin McRae Rally 3* and *Tony Hawk's 4* will be appearing on Gamecube anyway.

Of course, that's assuming you'll be able to tear yourself away from Nintendo's Big Three for long enough to play anything else…

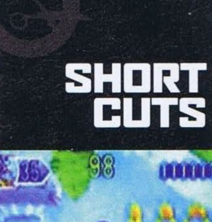


△ Satoru Iwata extols the virtues of Gamecube and Game Boy Advance.



special cart with a horizontal grey cylinder containing a colour camera sitting on top. It allows the Game Eye and GC link cable to be connected at the same time, so it will be possible to send live images through the internet and put your face in certain games. The title used to demo it was called Stage Debut – a conversion of the pointless 64DD Talent Maker game. Stage Debut is highly unlikely to be released here (or anywhere, if Nintendo have any sense) but the Game Eye is expected to launch next year.

SHORT CUTS



NIGHTS ON LITE SATURN

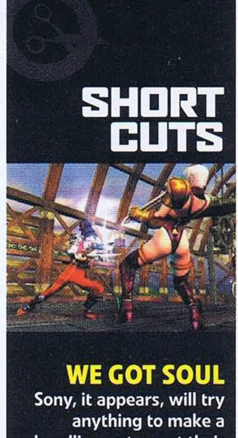
Sega's cult Saturn game *Nights* (or *NiGHTS*, if you prefer) is winging its way to Game Boy Advance, in the form of a new 2D side-scrolling mini-version. The GBA probably isn't quite powerful enough to replicate the Saturn version in its full 3D splendour, but there's a huge consolation for fans of the game – this time round it's a downloadable freebie! Buy *Phantasy Star Online*, plug your GBA into the Gamecube, and you'll be able to download it for nowt from the *Phantasy Star* server. The game was displayed at E3, and it appears to have essentially the same gameplay as the original.



CREATE-A-KONG

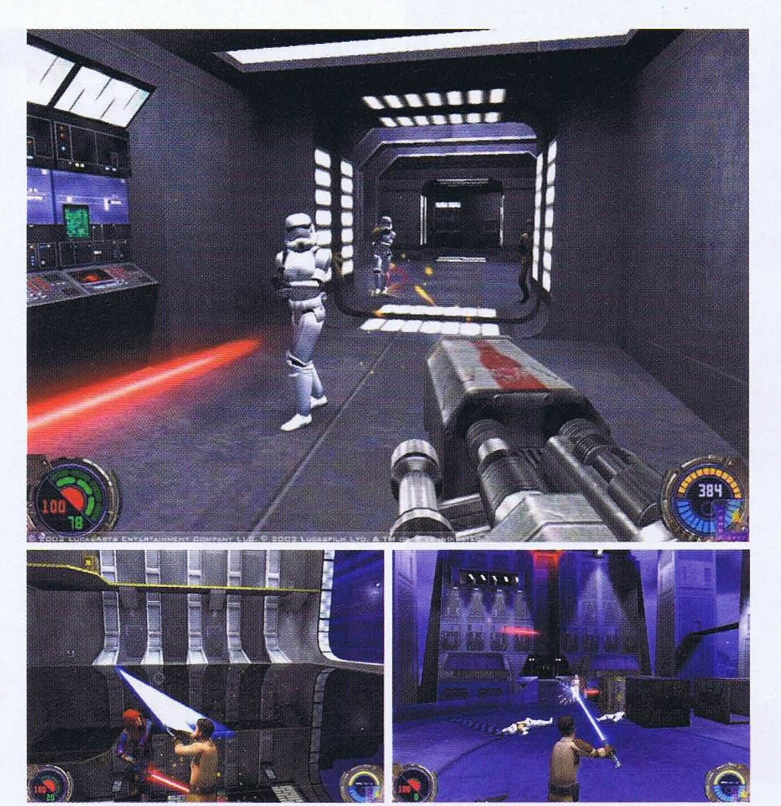
***Donkey Kong* is coming to Gamecube! And no, it isn't developed by Rare, because the forthcoming *Donkey Kong Plus* is actually a retro update of the original *DK* arcade machine. The game, due to be released some time in 2003, will be played via the GBA link cable, with the main levels being designed on the Gamecube, then downloaded to the GBA to play anywhere. The picture above shows part of the Gamecube level-editing screen. Nintendo showed video footage at E3, and nobody who saw it could figure out exactly why the whole thing couldn't be done on the Game Boy Advance alone. We smell secrets aplenty in store here…**

SHORT CUTS



WE GOT SOUL

Sony, it appears, will try anything to make a headline or two: at their pre-E3 press conference they confidently stated that Namco's top-drawer beat-'em-up *Soul Calibur 2* would be a PlayStation 2-exclusive. This is despite Gamecube and Xbox versions having already been demoed in Japan. We had a quiet word with Namco officials and, predictably, they told us *Soul Calibur 2* was most definitely on its way to Gamecube. Tsk. Honestly.



△ The PC version of *Jedi Knight II* offers incredible levels of detail. Just look at it. LOOK!

KNIGHT TO REMEMBER

LucasArts confirm they're doing a Cube version of the fantastic PC Star Wars game.

The news gets better every day. After *Star Wars Bounty Hunter* and *Clone Wars* comes the best game of the lot: the lengthily-titled *Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast* (breathe). The utterly, utterly brilliant PC adventure has already been given the green light on Gamecube and is being readied for launch later on this year.

The game, currently the toast of the PC-playing world, is an ingenious mix of of first-person gunnery and third-person lightsaber action, and sees you taking on the guise of Kyle Katarn (the same Jedi Knight you played as in the creaky *Dark Forces* games), who has abandoned the way of the Force, but who, throughout the course of the game, is gradually drawn back to the side of good.

Developed by Raven on the PC using the fantastic *Quake III: Arena* engine, *Jedi Knight II* has tons of standout moments, but its finest achievement has to be the AI squeezed out of its Stormtroopers, with up to ten enemies gunning for you at any one time, ducking, circling and firing at you from sniping positions. Additionally, the textures and locations are accurate down to the last detail, as Raven took photographs and nabbed blueprints from the original film trilogy in order to make the game look spot-on.

How the Cube version will differ still isn't clear, but this has the potential to be better than *Rogue Leader*. **TW**

SHORT CUTS



CLUB FOOT

As well as confirming *Colin McRae 3* and *LMA Manager*, Codemasters also let rip with two further announcements: *Club Football* and *Shoot to Kill*. Despite software houses falling over each other to wow punters at E3, the latter remains a shadowy secret at Codies' HQ, though is believed to introduce some 'revolutionary' new ideas to the first-person genre. The plot sees you as a Drug Enforcement Agency official going after cocaine traffickers in Colombia. *Club Football* is less secretive: a soccer game hoping to rival *ISS*, it'll be available in 15 different versions, each endorsed by a separate club. English teams include Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool and Man Utd.

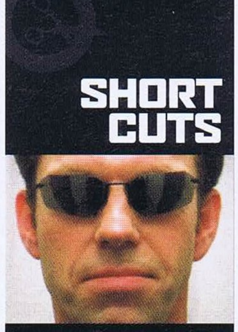
ROLL WITH IT

Stop the presses! *Flippin' Kirby* is no more. In fact, Kirby is no more. Meet *Roll-o-rama*.

One of Nintendo's lesser announcements was the transformation of *Flippin' Kirby*, the inspired-sounding GC-to-GBA compatible puzzle game, into *Roll-o-rama*, a new Kirby-free experience. In fact, the announcement was so low-key – it wasn't even mentioned at The Big N's pre-E3 press conference – that we only saw about two or three people playing the game the entire time we were at the show. A bit of a shame, really, because it was actually quite a nifty little game.

Roll-o-rama features unique connectivity between Gamecube and GBA, but it can be played separately on each; you use the GBA as a controller, complete with Nintendo's new motion-sensor technology, and turn the GBA left, right, up and down to move the ball around on screen. There were other things to impress: the rolling ball can absorb things (the whole reason this was a Kirby title in the first place) such as Gamecubes, changing the speed at which the game moves. The speedier things get, the harder it is to keep the ball on the board. When the ball falls off, it drops into your GBA screen, and you have to try and return it to the Cube version. Keep 'em peeled for more. **GE**

SHORT CUTS



REEVES RELOADED

Seen the fantastic trailer for *The Matrix* on the net yet? Well, get your peepers round it if you haven't because before very long you're going to see digitally recreated versions of Keanu, Carrie-Ann Moss and Larry Fishburne. The game's under the watchful eye of Infogrames and coding has been taken away from Shiny in the US and returned to Infogrames' French HQ. It'll be out some time in 2003.



FEEDING THE ANIMAL

Animal Crossing will boast two smart new features for its US release: first off, it'll be compatible with the e-card reader, allowing players the opportunity to scan in special trading cards to unlock extra items. And, second, the classic NES games that you unlock can be downloaded onto your GBA via the link cable. The RAM will keep them in there until you switch off your Advance – then you'll have to download them again. Still, what a great idea.

AUTUMN RELEASE FOR US MODEM

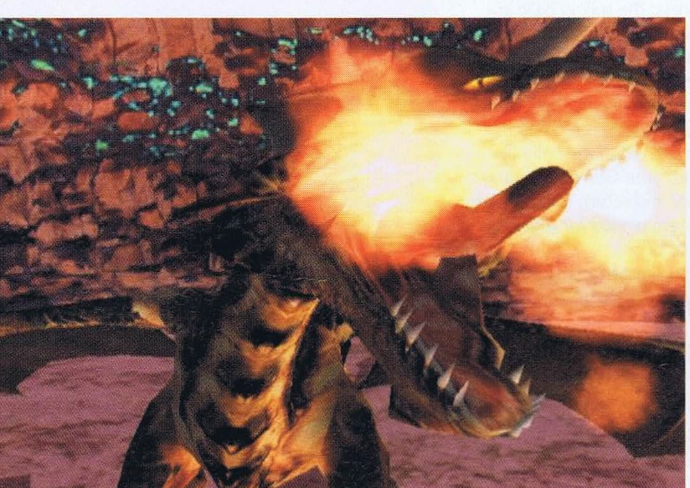
Like Japan, *Phantasy Star* is the net gaming guinea pig in the US. Which begs the question: when does the UK follow suit?

Aside from the brain-blasting games announcements, Nintendo also used E3 as a chance to confirm the release date for their modem in the US, the price ($35), and the first game to make use of it, *Phantasy Star Online*.

"Entering the (online) business because it's the hot topic of the day doesn't make a profitable business nor satisfied customers," said Satoru Iwata of Nintendo America, echoing the words of Shigsy in an interview with **NGC** back in issue 38. Then, Miyamoto stated that "If it ever came to the stage where we were talking about online gaming, it would be because we had a new way to approach the idea. It wouldn't just be because everybody else is doing it".

Phantasy Star Online obviously is the new idea they've been waiting for.

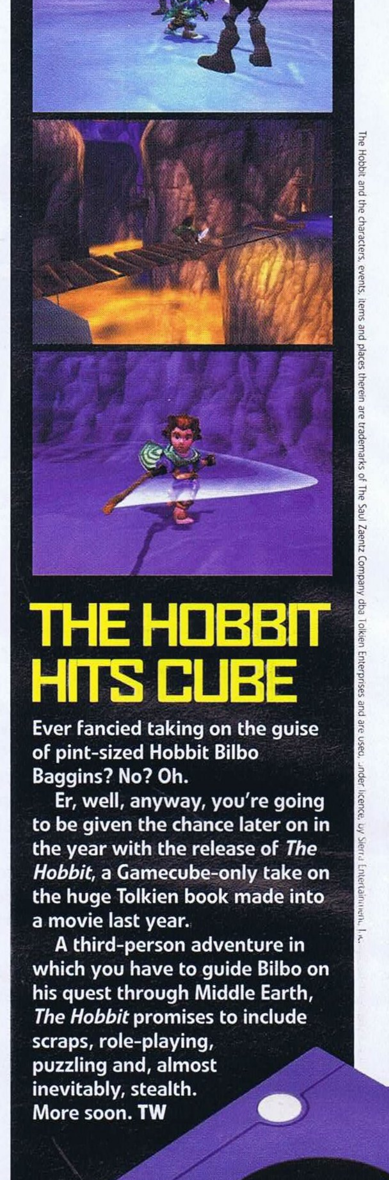
Or maybe not. There was certainly a feeling at E3 that Nintendo had moved into the online field more out of curiosity – and, despite what they were saying, a little necessity – than with any real passion for the online side of the business. Certainly they're not about to commit millions to the cause – most likely it'll be a wait and see policy.



△ One of the huge great boss beasts from *Phantasy Star Online* – coming soon to Cube.

UNITED? NOT QUITE

So, when will the UK get the modem? Nintendo Europe wouldn't comment preferring to focus on GC's future offline titles. Sources suggest the company are researching the possibility of taking *PSO* to territories outside the broadband twosome of the US and Japan, and most likely the Dreamcast is being hailed as an example. Without broadband, *Phantasy Star* ran decently in the UK through a standard 56k modem on DC, leading another source to suggest it was when and not if here on Cube... **TW/GE**



THE HOBBIT HITS CUBE

Ever fancied taking on the guise of pint-sized Hobbit Bilbo Baggins? No? Oh.

Er, well, anyway, you're going to be given the chance later on in the year with the release of *The Hobbit*, a Gamecube-only take on the huge Tolkien book made into a movie last year.

A third-person adventure in which you have to guide Bilbo on his quest through Middle Earth, *The Hobbit* promises to include scraps, role-playing, puzzling and, almost inevitably, stealth. More soon. TW

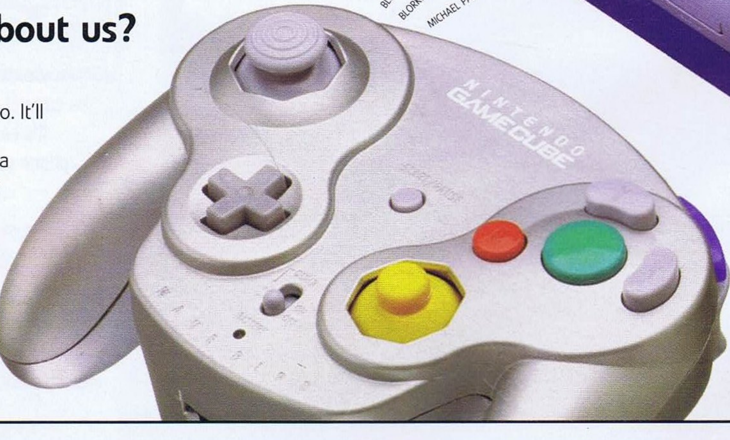
FREE AS A BIRD

The US are getting Wavebird. So what about us?

The 10th June is when the States finally get Nintendo's much-talked-of Wavebird controller, the RF-powered pad that has no leads and can be played from a different room to where your Gamecube is currently mounted.

The genius piece of kit was introduced by Shigsy himself and runs off two AA batteries. According to reports, there should be around 100 hours' worth of play from two Duracells – an astonishing figure when you consider what you're asking it to do. It'll retail for 35 dollars.

Predictably, there's no news on a release for Europe, although we're assured it's very much on for autumn. A good thing too considering that, at E3, you could enter a competition to win one and – shucks – we weren't first out of the hat. Those blinkin' Americans. **GE**





RETURN LAP
Criterion have confirmed that they are developing Burnout 2 for Gamecube.

YOU LIKE TO WATCH
Get ready for Game & Watch Gallery 4 from Nintendo for the GBA. It'll include 'new' versions of Donkey Kong 3, Mario's Cement Factory and Fire Attack. It's out some time early next year here.

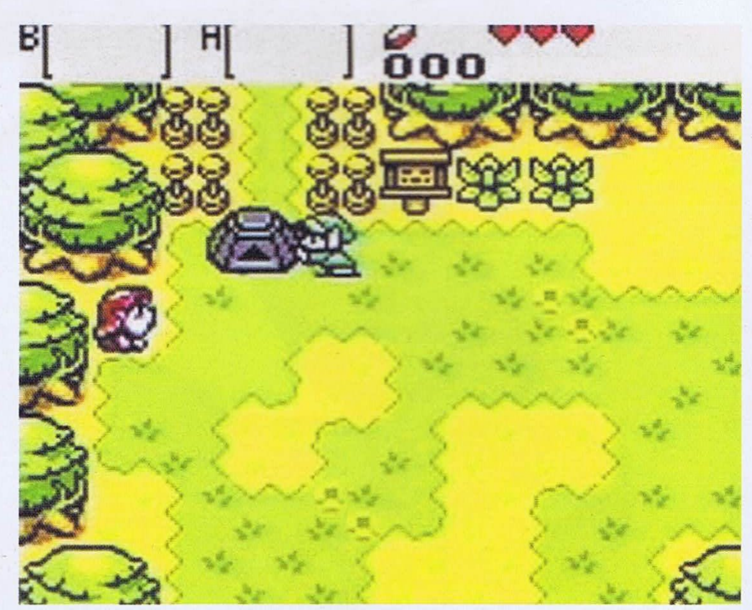
YOU'RE FIRED
Seen the trailer for brilliant-looking future-set dragon movie, Reign of Fire? Well, BAM! are readying a Gamecube version for the autumn. Let's hope they don't do a Driven on it.

THE BIG Q

WHY ARE NINTENDO DISHING OUT THEIR TOP FRANCHISES TO THIRD-PARTIES? AND IS IT A GOOD MOVE?



△ *Mario Party 4* represents yet another team-up between Nintendo and a third-party. This'll be Hudson's fourth *Mario Party* game for Yamauchi and pals.



△ *Zelda: Oracle of Seasons* and its soulmate *Oracle of Ages* were developed by Capcom for Nintendo. The result was fantastic – a taster of what we've got in store in 2003.

OLD AND IMPROVED

First Capcom with their dual *Oracle* adventures and now Sega and Namco with *F-Zero* and *Starfox* respectively. Nintendo's new policy, it would seem, is to entrust third-party developers with their most precious franchises. Two years ago – maybe less – this would have been as unlikely as Yamauchi extolling the virtues of Xbox's hard drive. So why the sudden change of heart?

DELEGATE, NOT RELEGATE

One simple reason is that Nintendo can't keep delivering high-quality sequels again and again within a short space of time. As Shigeru Miyamoto said at a Nintendo conference in Japan: "We can strengthen our software catalogue by working with other companies. I don't believe that simply hiring more staff and creating more games internally will guarantee success. On the contrary, it jeopardises the quality of our products. There are limits to how many projects we can work on at the same time." And, on reflection, evidence for the delegation of Nintendo's IPs (Intellectual Properties) outside Nintendo HQ has been staring us in the face for quite some time. Rare has long since taken *Donkey Kong* under its wings, Camelot have been responsible for Mario's superb sporting titles, Hudson hold the *Mario Party* reigns and of course HAL Laboratories have had a finger in countless Nintendo's pies, from *Kirby* to *Pokémon*.

WHO GETS WHAT?

So how do Nintendo decide who gets to make what, and is it really such a good idea to trust 'outsiders' with their most cherished franchises? Firstly, all the external companies entrusted with Nintendo's IPs are the most established and respected game makers in the industry – companies who have been creating games almost as long as Nintendo themselves. Furthermore, despite Nintendo's seeming infallibility, there are still companies who have expertise in certain fields that surpass Nintendo's by a substantial margin. "We respect the power of Nintendo in the console market," said Toshihiro Nagoshi from Sega's Amusement Vision last March, "but we know we are the best at arcade games" – and he's right.

If you were to trust anyone to push *F-Zero* into exciting new territory, it's the creators of *Daytona*, and in all honesty, the prospect of an AV-developed *F-Zero* is (dare we say it) more exciting than another in-house sequel from Nintendo.

PASS OVER

The other key reason could be that Nintendo see the move as a chance to breathe new life into their franchises.

Take Namco's recent announcement regarding the next 'true' *Starfox* sequel for example. "I began to realise that Mr Shiozawa could take the series in a new direction… I have to admit, I've been dreaming of the possibility of people dog-fighting in a *Starfox* arcade game," said Miyamoto at a press conference with Namco producer Atsushi Shiozawa. Shiozawa, in case you didn't know, is the producer responsible for the popular *Ace Combat* series on PlayStation.

So what other exciting collaborations can we expect in the future? Well, there are already rumours flying around regarding a Nintendo-Capcom developed RPG/adventure, and Nintendo no doubt have plenty more planned besides. Either way, it's refreshing to see them forging and maintaining strong relationships with the industry's biggest big hitters. **GE**

LEFT ALONE

So Nintendo are just going to dump the workload on someone else then? Well, almost. Sega, for example, will be left largely to their own devices and Nintendo will supervise once things get under way. "We're taking care of planning and execution," says Toshihiro Nagoshi of Amusement Vision. "Once things take shape we'll turn to Nintendo. If they planned to hold our hands through development, we'd have suggested they develop the game themselves – but I was told most of the responsibility would be left to us." The same applies to Namco's *Starfox* sequel. According to Shigsy, "the staff previously responsible for *Starfox 64* won't be involved, allowing Namco to create their own world for *Starfox*. I trust them – that's why decisions are being left in their hands." The results should prove very interesting indeed.



MORE MIRRA
Get ready for Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX XXX at Christmas. Tsch. XXX indeed.

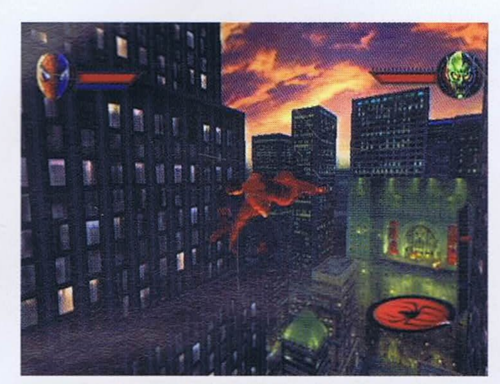
AUTOMATIC NOT FOR THE PEOPLE
Nothing was confirmed or denied on the Auto Modellista front. The dreamy cel-shaded racer from Capcom is supposed to be underway for Gamecube, but no-one at the Japanese giant would comment.

SEE NO EVIL
WWF – oh, sorry, WWE – publishers THQ had plenty to shout about at E3… but their best titles were for other formats. While the PS2 got Red Faction 2 the Gamecube got SpongeBob Squarepants.


OUR PROMISE
Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work – we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict – and one that saves you from wasting money.
THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE – FIRST!
NGC REVIEWS
IN REVIEWS THIS MONTH
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING
HOGAN AND THE REST. ANY TAKERS? P74
VIRTUA STRIKER 3
SEGA'S ARCADE FOOTBALL FEST P83
P62 SPIDER-MAN
P71 Z.O.E.
P72 V-RALLY 3
P73 JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERX
P84 RAVE
WHAT IS PAL?
PAL is the UK's broadcasting standard. When you buy a Cube here it will be PAL. When you buy a Cube in the US or Japan it'll be NTSC – a different broadcasting standard, and the reason the two don't mix. Import games are NTSC games.
WARNING! DON'T SPLASH CASH UNTIL YOU'VE READ NGC'S REVIEWS!
PIKMIN
Get into Shigsy's garden! Lead the Pikmin a jolly dance in Nintendo's stonking real-time strategy… P54

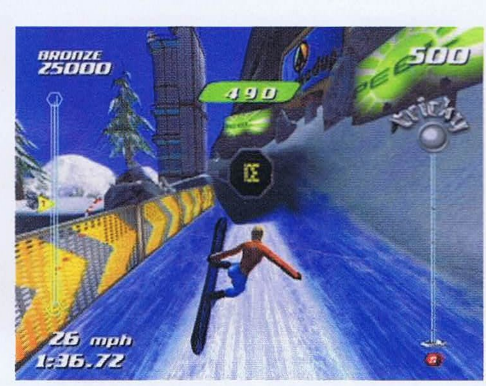
HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the biggest, most comprehensive on Planet Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you more detail than anyone else. And in the new **NGC** things have just got a whole lot better: our Field of Play and Event-o-meter regulars will pinpoint exactly when and where games get good, and yet our verdicts remain the most honest and most stringent around.



SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE

Do whatever a spider can, take out the Green Goblin, then home for tea and cakes… **P62**



SSX TRICKY

Yeah, okay, so it's a PS2 port, but this high-octane piece of powder power is a super-slick snowboarding sizzler. Breathe. **P76**

1 GET INTO THE GAME

The quickest and smartest way to get started…



2 FIELD OF PLAY

The game's best bit taken apart and analysed…



3 EVENT-O-METER

The good bits, the bad bits – all in a handy graph…






4 THE SCORE BAR

The verdict explained for you…

PROS AND CONS
Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with plus and minus points.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suggestions here.

VISUALS AND SOUNDS
Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY
How well does the game make use of the Cube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN
Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? Here you'll find out for sure…

VERDICT
We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict on whether you should purchase a game.

+
- Over 400 licensed firearms.
- Great tank-based minigames.
- Bloody and painful deaths.
- Set in Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

–
- No Desert Eagle Mark VI .44.
- No H&K USP. 45 ACP.
- No Beretta Model 687EL Gold.
- No Sig Sauer 239 9mm.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Perfect Dark
Rare
NGC/42 96%
Genius first-person shooter. Shame there's no Browning.



7 VISUALS
Meticulously designed guns – the Glock G19 even has night sights!

3 SOUNDS
The sound of someone being shot in the guts isn't squelchy enough.

8 MASTERY
Big guns, bigger rifles – this game has got all the weapons you need.

4 LIFESPAN
Quite simply, not enough people willing to be shot in the face.

VERDICT
***Jud Webb's World of Weaponry* is violent and gritty, with brilliantly realised and staggeringly backward locales. Very neat.**

NGC 81

5 OUR SCORING SYSTEM

What those scores mean to you…

NGC STAR GAME

0-24	25-49	50-74	75-89	90+
Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this is crud.	Disappointing, stashed with faults and likely to be short of any quality.	Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.	Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.	Rarely awarded, you'll know a 90+ is absolutely essential.

MEET THE NGC TEAM

Spider-Man? Who he? Look and learn as the **NGC** team show you *real* superheroes…



TIM
"I'm The Atom! When RealTim wants a rest, MiniTim breaks off via my, erm, mouth, to beat this gaggle of turds into shape…"



JUD
"If I was a murderer… er, I mean superhero, I'd be Glockman. I'd shoot… I mean, help, those in need by firing rounds… I mean. Oh."



KITTSY
"I am – The Offender! Yes, I have powers you can only imagine, powers that will rule the world! Anyone seen my 'blade set'?"



GERAINT
"Leek and ye shall find!" reckons Geraint, or JerryAnt to give him his weekend name. "That's the motto of – Captain Swansea!"



PAUL
"They call me The Muddy Brown Surfer. I'm a bit like the Silver Surfer, except I don't surf in space. I surf in, erm, Woolacombe."



DAN
"Pucker up, loves…"



JES
"I am Reflect-o-man! Toothless? No! Well, yes, but no. You know. I am, but I'm not. I guess, technically, I am… oh, whatever."



LEE
"Call me Kissachu!" beams female role-model Lee, our new recruit from the coal-stained wastelands of Newcastle. Berk.



MARK
"Look into my eyes," says Pikmin expert Mark. "Go on. Ha! Now I can take your bishop with my queen. Great sweater, this, eh?"

This month only! Hi-tech team photo manipulation by Tim Weaver.

"Shigsy's inspiration came while he was pottering around his garden"



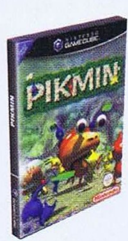


△ When the base is fully stocked with all three varieties of Pikmin, it's time to revisit previous areas to see which additional puzzles can be completed using the new colours. Every level has something new to find.

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER:	NINTENDO
PUBLISHER:	NINTENDO
PLAYERS:	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES:	19
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	YES
GBA LINK-UP:	NO
DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
Out about now in the UK – or on Jap and US import.



COST: £40

PIKMIN

It may look cute and cuddly on the outside, but this strategy game hides a tremendous level of depth for persistent gamers.



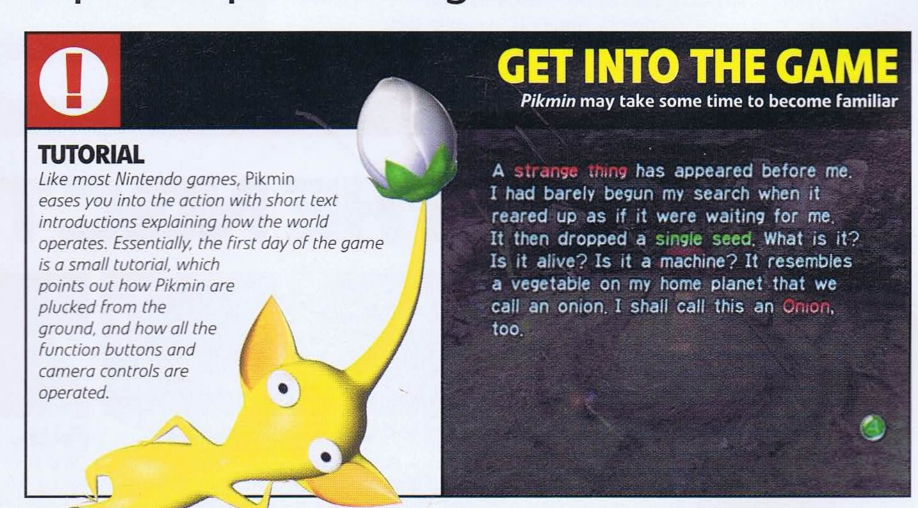
△ To knock things down, the Pikmin grab hold, lean back, and malky with all their might. Small heads, small headaches.

GET INTO THE GAME

Pikmin may take some time to become familiar

TUTORIAL

Like most Nintendo games, Pikmin eases you into the action with short text introductions explaining how the world operates. Essentially, the first day of the game is a small tutorial, which points out how Pikmin are plucked from the ground, and how all the function buttons and camera controls are operated.



Insane vegetable-based strategy in Shigsy's garden of delights

SUN DIAL

The sun meter moves along as the day progresses. The lighting across the landscape changes throughout the day and as the sun goes down shadows begin to get longer. It's a beautiful effect, but the constant pressure may frustrate you.

STYLE

Don't be put off by the typically Nintendo-esque kiddie graphics. The game is absolutely lush, and contains a charm and energy missing from many modern videogames. The visuals may be cute but the puzzles can be taxing.

SUIT YOU

Captain Olimar's space suit can only take a little damage, so he must avoid the many pitfalls on the planet's surface. He can get it repaired by going back to the Dolphin.

BUSY BEES

Keeping your Pikmin population up is vital for beating the game. This menu bar shows all the Pikmin that are working, waiting or planted in the ground.

BOMB AS YOU ARE

A typical puzzle will involve taking down a barrier to open up the field of play. Yellow Pikmin can carry special bomb-rocks, which can be placed next to walls and detonated. Three bombs are required to remove a barrier completely, but make sure you get the Pikmin out of the way before the bombs explode. Please.











Does Shigeru Miyamoto dream of electric sheep? What goes on in the mind of Nintendo's creative wizard? These are the questions that have often been posed to the most famous game designer on the planet. While many creatives turn everyday experiences into ever-more-realistic digital worlds, Miyamoto is happy sticking to the relatively simple, the bizarre, the outrageous and the wonderfully vibrant – interactive cartoons that are nothing like real life, but which offer unprecedented levels of invention and the sort of brilliance others can only dream of.

The world of *Pikmin* is one of his most unusual to date, with a style and characterisation that borders on genius. Reputedly, Shigsy's inspiration came while he was pottering around his Kyoto garden; but filtered by his brain, insects become warped alien manifestations, and common-or-garden plants are transformed into exotic organisms with a tendency to surprise you at every turn. But what makes *Pikmin* so special, and is the defining characteristic of all Shigsy's games, is that the world operates by its own coherent rules. Hugely bizarre it may be, but get absorbed in *Pikmin*'s strange logic and everything soon makes complete and utter sense.

The plot is simplicity itself, but in keeping with the offbeat feel of the game, it has a typical Nintendo flavour. As spacefaring adventurer Captain Olimar, it's your job to recover the 30 scattered parts of his crashed ship, the Dolphin. *Pikmin*'s surreal quality is enhanced by the narrative, in which Olimar has a peculiar dream before his journey, involving a favourite soup containing onions and carrots. This imagery, it transpires, is a vital component of the game, with Olimar naming many of the planet's flora and fauna after his vision. You'll soon learn how to pluck the carrot-like Pikmin out of the



PIKMIN POWER

If you leave your Pikmin in the ground, they will eventually become more powerful. Pikmin evolve through three stages: leaf, bud and flower. Let your Pikmin grow flowers, and they become much quicker and can carry objects back to the Dolphin much faster. Pikmin can also drink special nectar to grow buds and flowers.

"THE WORLD IS ONE OF SHIGSY'S MOST UNUSUAL TO DATE, WITH A STYLE AND CHARACTERISATION THAT BORDERS ON GENIUS"





REVIEW UK

"*Pikmin* is so captivating you won't realise you're playing an RTS"



△ The bigger the enemy, the more Pikmin you'll need to take it down. Even if this lone blue one could win here, it couldn't possibly carry the carcass home.



△ It's hard to define exactly what makes *Pikmin* such a charming game, but despite being very different from anything Miyamoto has done in the past, it still oozes Nintendo niceness.

FIELD OF PLAY

Pikmin at a glance – the basics behind Nintendo's weirdest game in, ooh, months.

FOOD

Kill any plants or creatures, and their husks can be carried back to the Onions to produce more Pikmin. Once the Onion has sucked up the food, Pikmin shoots appear in the ground nearby. The husks of larger creatures produce more seedlings.

THE DOLPHIN

Olimar's craft is a dilapidated wreck at the start of the game, but as you add components to it, it begins to look more shipshape. Collecting parts of the ship cleverly adds structure to the game – the Dolphin will be able to reach more locations once vital components have been added.

ONIONS

Though you only begin the game with a red Onion and red Pikmin, the yellow and blue Onions will soon emerge. Only 100 Pikmin can be in the field of play at once, but it is possible to store Pikmin for later use. Juggling between different types of Pikmin is necessary to overcome the many creatures and obstacles in the game.



BOSS BATTLES

Some hard-to-reach ship parts are guarded by nasty bosses, which must be dispatched with a special strategy. This giant mushroom creature can be attacked with the red warrior Pikmin – but watch out, because its defence is to spray a nasty fungal gas, which possesses your trusty helpers and turns them against you. It's best to attack it while it's upside down and vulnerable.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Most pieces of the Dolphin can only be obtained by using several types of Pikmin. To collect the Geiger Counter, you will need both blue and red Pikmin.



TROUPING THE PIKMIN
Take a troupe of blue Pikmin through the water, and get ten of them to move this box out of the way.



DISCIPLINARIAN
You can dismiss the blue Pikmin by hitting Y. Leave them here and go back to collect some red Pikmin back at the base.



COME ON YOU REDS
Bring as many reds as you can back to where the box was before. Separate them from the blues by pressing Y again.



CAREFULLY DOES IT
Take the reds across this narrow stretch of land in small groups. Take too many and they may fall into the deadly water.



ATTACK OF THE 60CM BIRDS
Huge birds are protecting the Geiger Counter. Fling your red Pikmin at their heads where they are most vulnerable.



REAPING THE REWARDS
Assign Pikmin to carry the Geiger Counter back to the Dolphin, and you'll have collected a vital part of the ship.



planet's surface and store them in the huge onion pods for later use. The dreamlike quality is brilliantly expressed, and is part of the essential charm of the experience.

MAD MANAGEMENT

Resource management is not a term often associated with Nintendo games, but you can forget the tired and stodgy stockpiling and menu bars in real-time strategy games on the PC – *Pikmin* is so captivating you probably won't even realise you're playing an RTS, albeit a very warped one. Essentially, the tiny Pikmin are the units in the game, allowing you to deliver the lost parts back to your ship. Captain Olimar is not strong enough to carry heavy objects, so he must assign a number of Pikmin to various tasks. A typical ship part takes 20 Pikmin to carry, but there are many puzzles to solve before you can ferry the important objects back.

Clever management of your Pikmin is crucial. There are red, yellow and blue Pikmin to control, and each can perform unique actions. The red Pikmin are the best warriors, and can dispatch many of the aggressive beasts in the game with greater efficiency; yellow Pikmin can be thrown to high places and can carry special bomb-rocks to destroy barriers; and the blue Pikmin are good swimmers, allowing them to wade into otherwise inaccessible areas. Often, a combination of Pikmin must be used to reach particular ship parts and solve particular tasks. Some must attack dangerous creatures, while others are away building bridges or dismantling barriers. Multi-tasking becomes ever more important in the later stages of the game.

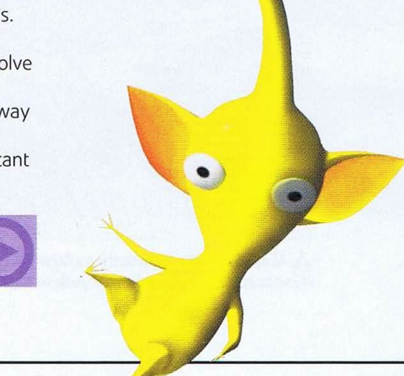
Which brings us on to one of the main criticisms of the game: time pressures. Captain Olimar must find all the elements of his

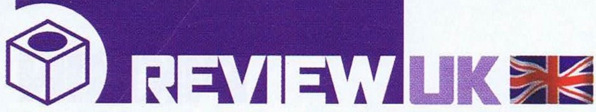


SECOND VIEW

The camera an be rotated by using the L button and you can zoom into the action by pressing the R button. There are also three camera angles which can be chosen with the Z button, so whatever you're doing, you'll always have a good view over the playing area.

"RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISN'T A WORD YOU NORMALLY ASSOCIATE WITH NINTENDO – BUT THIS ISN'T AN ORDINARY RTS"





"Locations range from thick forests to desert landscapes"

CREATURE FEATURES

There are many ways to skin a Pikmin, not least by fire, flab and fungus. The many creatures inhabiting the world can be vicious – here's just a small selection of the worst offenders.



BEETLE

Fling a Pikmin up the beetle's nose when he's about to cough up a boulder. This makes him open up his shell, ready for your attack.



BLOWHOG

Found in the Forest Navel, these foul animals will go out of their way to torture your poor Pikmin by squirting flames in their direction.



METAL BEETLE

This nasty boss can crush all your Pikmin in one go with its boulder attack. It's best to move them out of the way by using the C-stick.



BIG BUGS

These are the most common creatures on the Pikmin world. They are very sleepy, so it's best to rush them from behind before they wake.



POOL FROGS

These loathsome animals are pretty stupid, but they can deliver a nasty blow if you let them leap into the air and land on your head.



△ Majority rule: if mostly yellow Pikmin carry a carcass, it'll end up in the yellow Onion.



△ Best keep those yellows and reds well away from the water's edge. They die horribly when they get wet.



ship within 30 days – obviously, this breaks down into one ship part per day. In *Pikmin* time, a day lasts approximately 15 minutes: if you haven't managed to retrieve a vital object for your craft before the day ends, your chances of completing the game are reduced. There are two solutions to this: either continue regardless (you can save at the end of each day) or restart the whole day again. It's entirely possible to get through the entire game, only to find that you're short of a single ship part, and have to go back. The alternative is to keep going through some days again until the requisite object is collected – not the most enjoyable of tasks and massively frustrating as well.

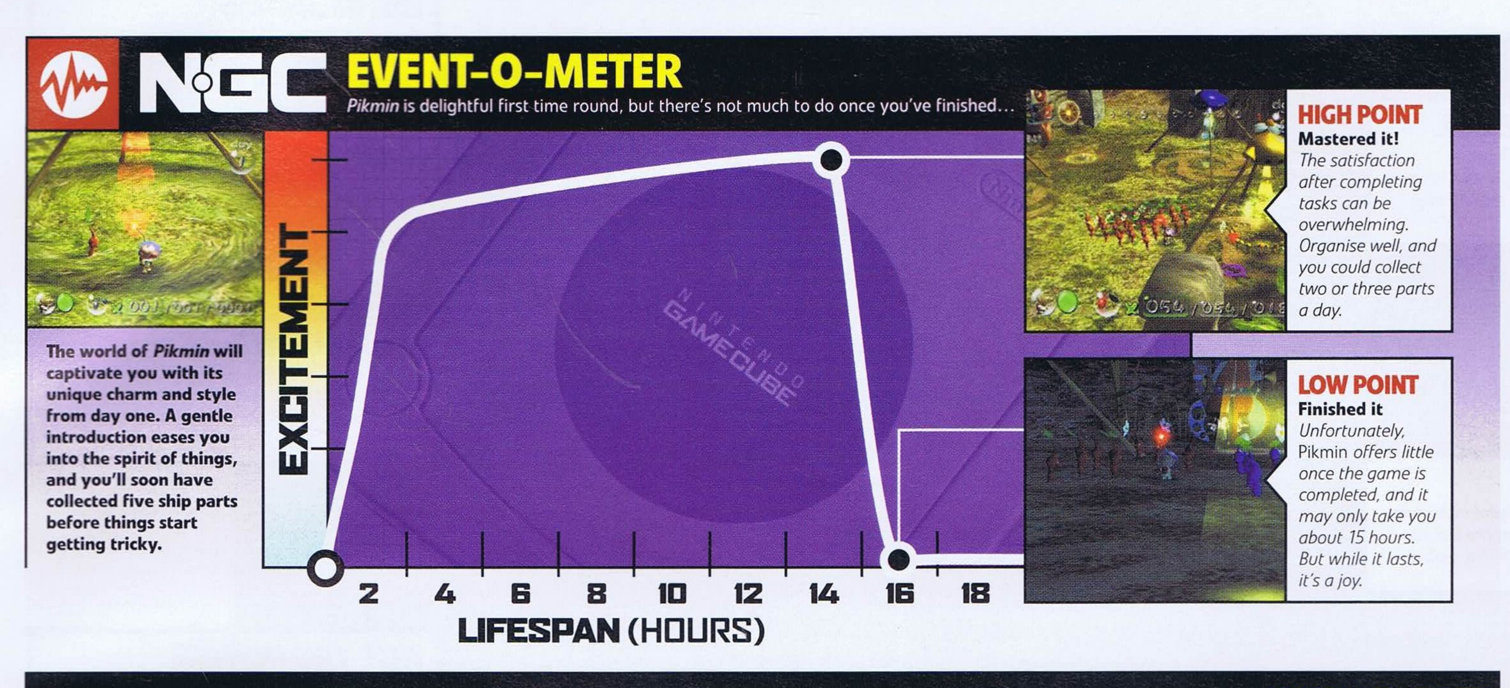
Fortunately, the many wonderful Nintendo touches more than make up for this. The sheer vibrancy of the world is a joy to navigate, and larger areas can be accessed once more equipment has been collected. Bring the radar back to the Dolphin, and a scanner will become available to spot all the objects of interest in a given level. The diverse locations in the game range from thick forests to desert landscapes, and each has its own distinct species of wildlife. Travel to the Forest Navel, for example, and Blowhogs will breath fire at your Pikmin, setting them alight and sending their spirits into the ether. The many creatures you will encounter on your fantastic journey are both amusing and refreshingly realised.

CYCLE OF LIFE

When Pikmin die – and you'll lose more than a few brave souls during your quest – they can be replaced with new seedlings.

NGC EVENT-O-METER

Pikmin is delightful first time round, but there's not much to do once you've finished...



The world of *Pikmin* will captivate you with its unique charm and style from day one. A gentle introduction eases you into the spirit of things, and you'll soon have collected five ship parts before things start getting tricky.

HIGH POINT
Mastered it!
The satisfaction after completing tasks can be overwhelming. Organise well, and you could collect two or three parts a day.

LOW POINT
Finished it
Unfortunately, Pikmin offers little once the game is completed, and it may only take you about 15 hours. But while it lasts, it's a joy.

COMPONENT PARTS

While most of the action in Pikmin happens in a fully-realised 3D world, there are several other areas you'll experience throughout the game.

RADAR

The radar is one of the first ship parts you will collect: once it's installed into the Dolphin, you will receive an overview of the level you are playing. Press the Y button and the ship parts in the vicinity will be displayed with a star, while your Pikmin will glow on the map to help you collect them and return them to your Onions before sundown. You also get a scorecard showing the number of parts you've recovered so far.



CUT-SCENES

The animated cut-scenes in Pikmin are short and sweet. They are just long enough to add depth to the plot but they never get overblown and in the way of actually playing the game, unlike some games we could mention. (Cough. Metal Gear Solid 2. Cough.) Cleverly, the number of Pikmin you return to the Onions at the end of the final day is integrated into the touching last cut-scene, showing your spaceship taking off from the planet.



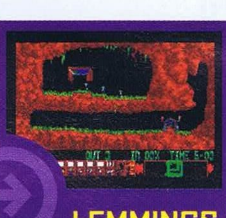
POPULATION COUNT

After a day of toiling, you'll see a status screen showing all the significant events. This includes a handy graph which displays the rise and fall of your Pikmin population. It's important to keep a good supply of Pikmin in your Onions at all times, although if the population of one colour is decimated, perhaps during a fight with a Metal Beetle, then at least keeping a single seedling to grow will ensure that tribe does not become extinct.

MAP SCREEN



The Pikmin world consists of four main areas: The Impact Site, The Forest of Hope, The Forest Navel and The Distant Spring. Once all the areas have been opened up and your ship is reasonably healthy, it is possible to fly the craft from one to the other until it's repaired entirely. This prevents the game from becoming too linear, and gives you greater opportunity for increasing the Pikmin population if one area has become over-harvested.



LEMMINGS

If you've ever played the excellent Lemmings, you will have a good idea how the game works. As in DMA's much-loved game, Pikmin can be commanded to perform tasks to overcome puzzles. Although Pikmin don't have the same kind of death wish, be careful you don't accidentally drop them from ledges or leave them to face deadly creatures alone.

> **"THERE IS MORE THAN ENOUGH INVENTION AND IMAGINATION TO KEEP YOU COMING BACK, DESPITE THE CONSTANT TIME PRESSURES"**

Harvesting Pikmin is another vital aspect of the game, and a careful watch on your Pikmin population must be maintained at all times. Attacking creatures, by throwing Pikmin on their backs while they're asleep, is a good way of harvesting food to produce more of your curious helpers. When the sun begins to go down, though, you'll need to hurry to get your coloured Pikmin back into the appropriate Onion, otherwise the creatures will eat them during the night. The well balanced ecosystem of *Pikmin*'s world works with beautiful logic, although again, you may get a little frustrated with having to spend considerable time harvesting Pikmin when the clock is ticking down. Lose too many of the little suckers in a battle, and you may just decide that it's better just to restart the whole day again.

Pikmin offers a captivating world to explore, and there is more than enough invention and imagination to keep you coming back, despite the time pressures. In light of our criticisms, though, and prolonged playtesting, we've decided to give the game an ever-so-slightly lower score than in our previous review of the import version (**NGC**/63). Vibrant and dynamic it may be, but ultimately, the largely wondrous *Pikmin* may just prove a little too troublesome for some.

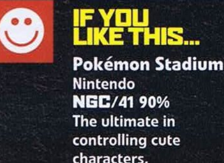
MARK WALBANK



- Beautifully realised.
- Imagination in spades.
- Refreshingly different.



- Time pressures.
- Over too quickly.
- Slightly annoying camera.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Pokémon Stadium
Nintendo
NGC/41 90%
The ultimate in controlling cute characters.





9 VISUALS
Pikmin's world has a style that is both refreshing and vivid.

8 SOUNDS
Some great noises and spot FX to bring the world alive.

8 MASTERY
Expert use of the hardware in all aspects of play. Impressive.



6 LIFESPAN
Once it's all over, there's little incentive to play through again.

VERDICT
A delight to the end, and a worthy purchase if you like games that require a little brain power. Pity it's over so quickly.





"The saddest part of *FIFA* is that it's been the same since the dawn of time"

BIG IN JAPAN
The commentary's not too bad, although Andy Gray sounds like he's done some deal with the Japanese tourist board, as he constantly extols the virtues of the Far East. Embarrassing.

BACKGROUND DETAIL
As always, the surroundings in FIFA are exemplary: all the right hoardings, a subs bench, linos, decent crowd. Shame about the rest of it.

TACKLE OUT
Never has the dreadfulness of FIFA's tackling been demonstrated more aptly than in this latest version of the game. Our advice? Don't bother.

THROUGH BALL
The version's big new feature: players make runs into space and, using Z, you deliver the ball into the gap. Great idea – doesn't work that well.

GOT THE POWER
If a player has a star above his head, he's – unsurprisingly – your star player. As well as being able to run the length of the pitch and score all in one breath, these players also have power shots.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

Enjoying the real World Cup? Good job too, considering that this gaming version is brain-numbingly awful…

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	EA SPORTS
PUBLISHER	EA SPORTS
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	49
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
FIFA is out in the shops now. But because EA wouldn't make PAL review copies available to us, we weren't able to review it last ish.



COST: £40

You've got to hand it to EA. At least they're consistent. Every year – or, if there's a World Cup in the offing, every six months – they chuck out a new *FIFA*, and every year/six months, it's absolutely appalling. And *2002 FIFA World Cup* is much the same, except this time round it's possibly worse than at any point in the series' far-too-long, far-from-illustrious career.

NOT THE SAME AGAIN

With the exception of one new feature – using Z to dictate where players make runs, and then delivering the ball into the space they've opened up – this *FIFA* makes EA's decision to dismantle and rebuild the last game, the Japan-only *Road to the World Cup*, seem like the worst decision since Keegan picked Phil Neville. *RTWC*, you'll remember from our review in **NGC**/64, was quite good. This most definitely isn't.

Oh sure, it's got digital versions of Totti, Henry and Nakata now, and it's got a new "revolutionary airplay system" that allows the best teams to perform a series of outlandish tricks in the opponent's penalty area – but does any of that really *matter*?

> "FIFA GAMES PLACE IMPORTANCE ON THE THINGS THAT DON'T MATTER AND IGNORE THINGS LIKE PASSING"

No. But, then, that's the point: *FIFA* places importance on the things that *don't* matter, and ignores the things that count, such as passing, shooting, sprinting, crossing and AI. It's hardly a new observation, but it's worth pointing out again: if EA spent as much time on the mechanics of the game as they did on perfecting the look of the stadiums and the players' boot designs, we'd have the best football game on the planet, no contest.

SHAKE AND CACK

But they don't. Instead, once again, *FIFA* looks and sounds fairly impressive

BARELY A GAME

A simple fact: *FIFA World Cup* ain't any good. Here's why…



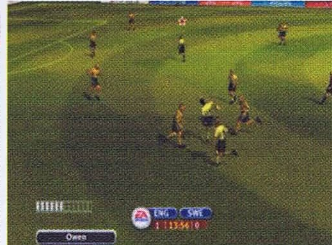
IT'S GOT… A SERIOUS CASE OF THE RUNS

Yep, pick up the ball on the edge of your own box and use speed-up to head to the other end and bag a goal.



IT'S GOT… TACKLING MINUS THE ACCURACY

Opposing team attacking on the break? Just give up. What's the point in trying when you can't tackle properly?



IT'S GOT… SELECT-THE-PLAYER EVILNESS

Wait a sec – no one's going to the man! Ah, that'll be because you haven't selected the player nearest the ball…



IT'S GOT… THE WORST PASSING EVER SEEN

Want to play total football? Good luck. With FIFA – you'll be lucky to string one pass together, let alone three or four.



△ Looks rubbish, doesn't it? That's because it is. And we're not just talking about the visuals either.



△ Zidane places a spot kick… against the post. Normally, though, scoring is astonishingly simple.

(although, to be honest, we've seen better as far as visuals are concerned – why, for example, are all the players so *shiny*?), while the rest of the game jerks around at frankly alarming rates, never moving above the pace of a celebrity over-40s testimonial.

It would seem there's no playtesting procedure in place at EA, because if there was even the secretary would have noted the game's abominable framerate and slowdown. Even when you're bringing defenders out from the back, the game slows down to a pace so excruciatingly sluggish it's barely even moving. And when the game starts to get interesting things get even worse: the frame-rate must drop to somewhere around the 20 mark, jumping all over the place as you attempt to take the ball forward, or make a crucial intervention. If the game wasn't already a hideous mess of random button-bashing, these 'issues' would make *FIFA* just about unplayable. Unfortunately, the game's already rubbish.



FOOTBALL ON FILM

About the best bit of this new FIFA is its 'Bonus' section, where three films detail the love affair the world has with football. The new moment is when two Man U fans sing about going to the European Cup Final. Yeah. You're just a small town in Stockport, small town in Stockport…

PASS ON THAT

Here are some other problems: there's no effective passing game; players can only tackle about 30 per cent of the time; shooting is stupidly easy; you can beat even the best teams by just hammering at speed-up and legging it from one end to another; tricks are pointless; keepers are cretinous; you have to select your player before they can tackle (*why oh why oh why* hasn't this feature been made illegal yet?); the referee blows for fouls about five seconds after they've been made… well, you get the idea.

One of the saddest parts of *FIFA*, though, is the fact that it's been just about the same since the dawn of time. It hasn't moved with the times, it offers nothing that wasn't being offered by the very first PlayStation outing in 1996, and it holds absolutely no surprises whatsoever. In *ISS*, whatever team you are, you really, genuinely feel you stand a chance of springing a surprise or two in a knockout competition, but in *FIFA* it's strictly by the book, only worth playing if you're playing with France or Brazil because otherwise you stand no chance. Which is exactly what football *shouldn't* be about.

But that sums up *FIFA* perfectly: it might claim to be football, but it's anything but.

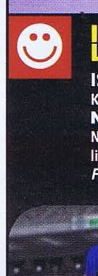
TIM WEAVER

+

- The Z-activated through-ball function.
- The stadiums and players aren't bad.

–

- Awful frame-rate.
- Terrible slowdown.
- Virtually nothing in common with football.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…
ISS 2
Konami
NGC/68 83%
Not perfect, but still light years ahead of *FIFA*. Get it in instead.



7 VISUALS
Good-looking players, perfect stadiums, even down to the hoardings.

5 SOUNDS
Nice soundtrack, odd crowd noises, Motson and Gray in a cave…

2 MASTERY
Might as well be a GBA game for all the use it makes of GC's hardware.

3 LIFESPAN
So shockingly rubbish so often, can you really be bothered with this?

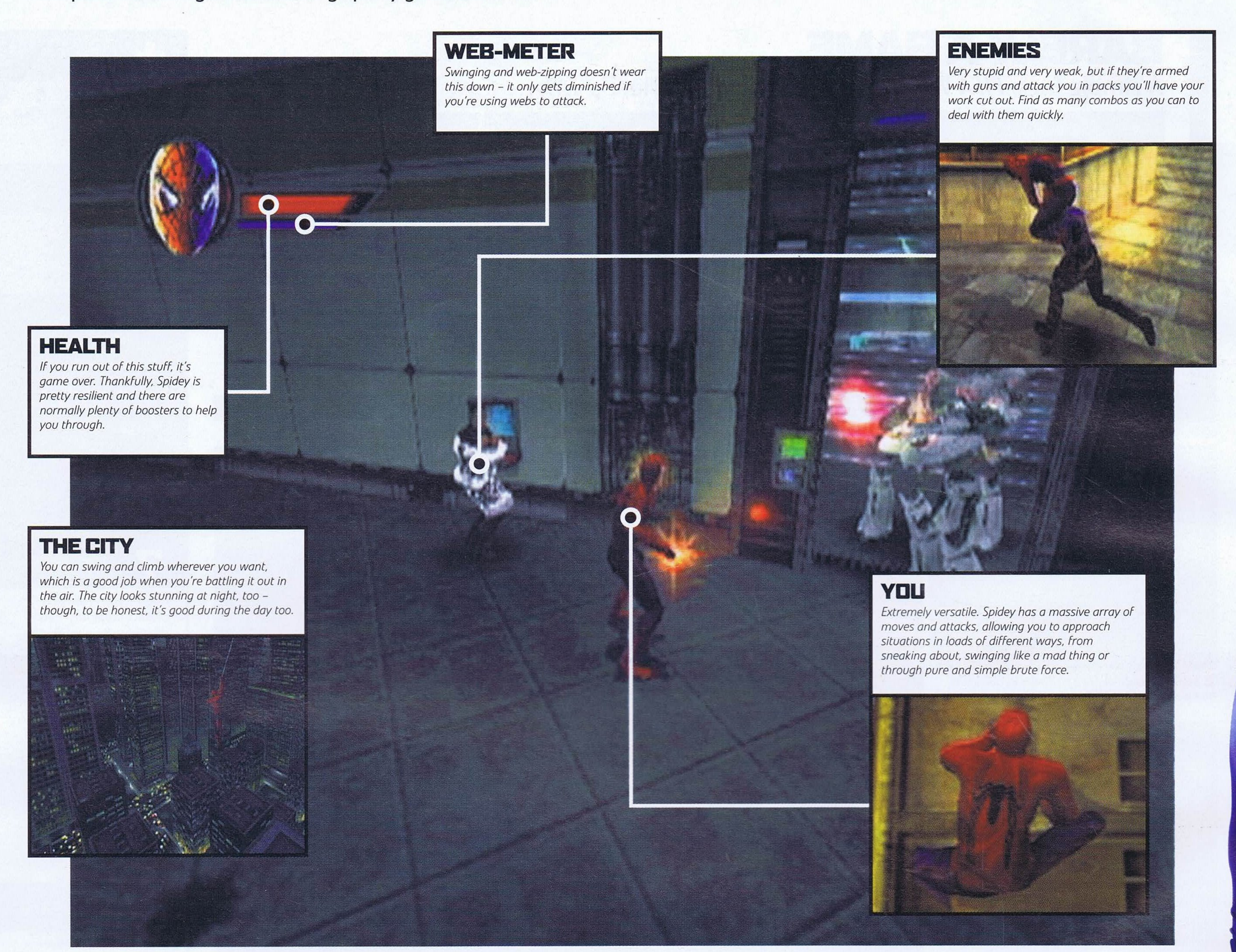
VERDICT

Another brain-drudge through mediocrity except this time it's got slowdown and a terrible frame-rate. Welcome back, *FIFA*!





"The potential for a ground-breaking Spidey game is massive"



INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	TREYARCH
PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	2
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT? *Spider-Man The Movie* is out now in the UK and the US.

COST: £40

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE

Arachno-wooooah-bia! Spider-Man hits Gamecube and we're stalking the web-slinging wonder all the way through his very latest adventure…



△ Spider-Man's character model is beautifully detailed and smoothly animated. It's just a shame the same attention wasn't lavished on the enemies.

△ Ohhh, would you look at that! Despite being shot at by Scorpion's laser beam, you can't help but marvel at the lovely lighting.

GET INTO THE GAME

Land yourself in the thick of things ASAP.

TRAINING MODE

There's one on offer, but there isn't all that much to it – deciding not to play through it certainly won't spoil your experience of the game.

NEW GAME

Start a new game and keep an eye out for any glowing question marks in the area – these will give you handy bite-sized tips and tutorials. Spider-Man will automatically start swinging through the city for you, so you can take your time figuring out the controls. Nice and easy.

Ever since we were old enough to pull a pair of Y-fronts over our heads and make an impromptu Spider-Man costume, we've longed for the chance to fire web-goo out of our wrists and prance about in tights without fear of arrest. Sadly, all we've had to make do with is a fair number of mediocre videogaming renditions of the masked marvel to satisfy our lust for web-slinging. We've *never* been totally satisfied and, as a result, we've grown to approach with a certain degree of trepidation any licensed game that's so heavily tied-in with our favourite superhero.

Even if this particular instalment was just a standard Spidey comic licence we'd still be dubious – but the fact that *Spider-Man: The Movie* is so obviously related to the summer blockbuster has us extremely worried. All a developer has to do is put any old Spidey-branded rubbish on the shelves and it will sell by the truckload. Unfortunate, really, because the potential for a ground-breaking Spidey game is massive, mainly because of the attributes of the hero himself.

THE ARACHNID ATTRACTION

The most important aspect of any licensed superhero game has to be the extent to which the developers can capture the essence of the character and the universe he inhabits, and in all fairness, Treyarch have done a remarkable job. The Spidey model itself is spot-on, boasting a healthy amount of texture detail on his suit (he even has shiny eyes) and they've also managed to get his

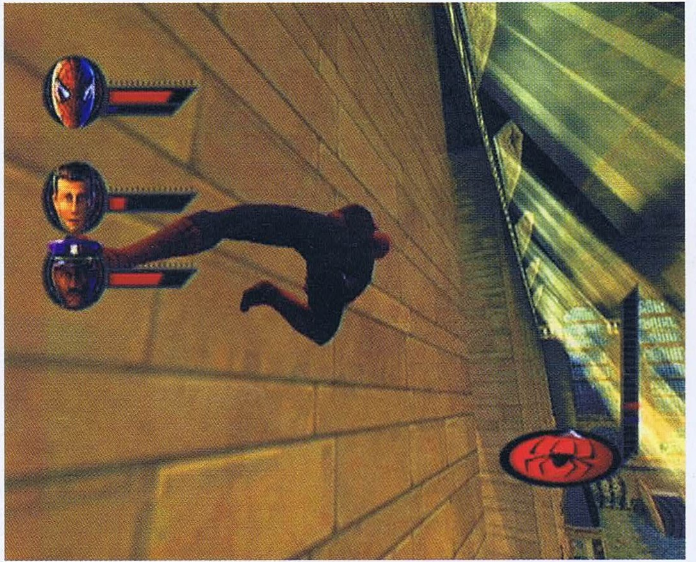
SPIDER-FACT! In the comic books, Spidey started out as a rubbish side-show wrestler before the death of his uncle Ben spurred him into life as a lycra-fancying, punk-bashing superhero.



"He exudes that inimitable Spidey-style we all know and love"

SPIDER SKILLS

As you'd expect, the array of moves and techniques at Spider-Man's disposal is immense – and almost every one will be required for success.



CLIMBING

By jumping into walls, Spidey can crawl over any surface he fancies, giving him a massive amount of freedom and allowing you to approach the levels in a number of different ways.



WEB GLOVES

Simple, but very effective in the right hands. By covering your mitts in web-goo, you increase the power of your attacks temporarily. Great for those last-ditch combos.



IMPACT WEB

Quite hard to use effectively, the impact web shoots a ball at your opponent, damaging them if you hit. This is a great attack if you're low on health and need to keep your distance.



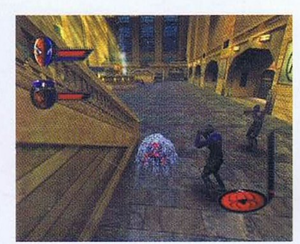
SWINGING

Can only really be used effectively if there's plenty of room. This allows Spider-Man to swing arm-over-arm in the air. Bizarrely enough, in the city, the webs attach to thin air.



WEB ZIP

One of the most useful techniques in the entire game. Hit the L-trigger and you'll web-grapple the roof and zoom up to the ceiling. You can also use it to launch at adjacent walls.



WEB DOME

Handy if you're battling groups of enemies. This shield will protect you from harm for a short time before shattering in a big webby mess, knocking back surrounding foes.



SPIDEY SENSE

In one of the coolest-looking moments of the game, your Spidey sense kicks in and you're treated to a fly-by first-person journey through the corridors of a bank, to reveal the location of security guards under attack. Your Spidey sense is also activated at moments of extreme danger – like incoming fork-lifts or life-threatening energy blasts. It also kicks in to alert you of important locations when swinging through the city. Smart.



stance and the way he moves pretty much perfect. Whether he's simply standing on the ground or squatting on the underside of a ceiling, his pose exudes that inimitable Spidey-style we all know and love.

Spidey's animation isn't bad, either. Granted, he does walk as if he's been sitting on a concrete block for a couple of hours, but the way he swings arm-over-arm over the open cityscapes is silky-smooth and graceful. In fact, our only gripe as far as visuals go is with the enemy character models themselves. Treyarch clearly haven't lavished as much attention on these guys as they should have – particularly the boss characters which are arguably as important.

The environments themselves are none too shabby, though. The most striking of all the locations are the outdoor city sections which appear at regular intervals throughout the adventure. The city itself comprises a huge area covered with a hundred or so skyscrapers of varying height. Spidey can swing through the air or from rooftop to rooftop, as well as scaling the sides of the buildings themselves. Given the vast amount of structures that you can swing to or climb up, the frame-rate remains consistently high – jarring only slightly during moments of intense action. Naturally, concessions have had to be made, the biggest of which is Spidey's inability to actually go down to street level. Should you attempt to do so, the game will allow you to fall to a certain altitude before plunging you to the busy street 'backdrop' below and, ultimately, to your doom.

Second to the open-air sections are the internal environments which, although not as impressive as the cityscape, are nicely constructed and varied. Whether you're in the bank, sewers, clock tower or subway, the locations are well-designed and nicely tailored with Spidey's abilities in mind, allowing him to crawl through vents, swing

> **"SPIDEY CAN SWING THROUGH THE AIR OR FROM ROOFTOP TO ROOFTOP, OR SCALE THE WALLS THEMSELVES"**

SPIDER MAN: THE MOVIE

The definitive review of Spider-Man's sense-tingling Gamecube debut



WEB BIND

The old faithful. Shooting this will wrap up your opponent, making them an easy target for repeated punching in the head. Be careful, though – some enemies are too strong to be held for long.



WEB YANK

Good for enemies who tend to jump all over the shop. By using this you can grab enemies from afar and yank them towards your fists. Another handy tactic for elusive bosses.



△ Make sure you stop this girder from killing the civilians below.

△ Climbing the burning clock tower is one of the most frustrating exercises ever.





across open hallways and sneak upside-down through corridors. There's even plenty of scenery for you to use as protection from enemy gunfire. Again, there's very little in the way of slow-down – even in the more cavernous areas – to spoil that all important impression of speed.

FLY IN THE OINTMENT

Still, getting the right Spidey 'feel' isn't quite enough to turn *Spider-Man: The Movie* into an essential third-person adventure, not least because the game has some *serious* problems that – ironically enough – stem from the abilities of Spider-Man himself.

Let's face it, a character who can climb up walls and across ceilings and swing over gaping chasms, before trapping enemies and delivering an athletic combo of punches and kicks to their face, is a gamer's dream



LOCK-ON

Okay, so the camera's complete rubbish – but it's not all bad. Thankfully there's a targeting lock (like in Zelda) that allows you to keep your foe in the centre of the screen. Trouble is, this makes escaping or quickly changing direction a little difficult and clumsy. But at least it's better than nothing.

come true. For one, the wealth of gameplay opportunities presented by being able to crawl over *any* surface offers a bewildering amount of freedom. The trouble is, for every avenue of choice open to the player, comes a whole world of pain for the coders trying to implement them. This doesn't just apply to level design, but affects the control scheme and, more detrimentally, the camera mechanics.

As we highlighted in our preview a couple of month's back, the camera is the first thing that threatens to ruin your enjoyment of the game. Even when you're wandering around on flat ground, it's twitchy to say the least. For example, if you're running towards the screen (with your back to the camera) and decide to

"Beat up goons, protect innocent civilians, root out keys, and solve basic puzzles"

WHO'S DA BOSS?

A gallery of the costumed rogues Spidey gets to 'grapple' with…



SCORPION

After helping this ungrateful metal beast by fending of swarms of techno-spiders, he decides to turn on you. This battle is pretty tough because he has (effectively) the same abilities as you, as well as some powerful short-range and long-range attacks.



SHOCKER

Nasty from a distance, but just plain irritating up close. After you've smashed his henchmen's faces in he does a runner and you have to track him down through the city subway. Look out for the energy blasts he shoots from his hands while you throw explosives at him.



THE VULTURE

This green-winged OAP is a bit on the freaky side. After chasing him up a burning clock tower, he makes his escape across the city where you have to chase him and repair the damage he does. From then on, it's just one-on-one over the streets of New York.



GREEN GOBLIN

The main boss man. You'll run into this fella on a number of occasions as he keeps messing about with your beloved Mary Jane. Flying about on his glider, he's another tough cookie as he has plenty of weaponry to keep you on your toes. Stand still at your peril…



△ **The bosses tend to be the biggest sticking point when you're trying to find their weaknesses.**



change direction, the camera doesn't actually change position to accommodate your change of direction. You can rotate the camera around Spider-Man (by using the C-stick) until it's in the desired position, but in doing so, the control scheme fails to compensate for the new viewing angle. In fact, it only adjusts itself if you stop using the analogue for a second before continuing.

This is forgiveable when you're simply exploring, but when you're in the middle of a ruck with a group of enemies or a boss character, it can get extremely annoying, often leading to an untimely death, or substantial health-loss. To compound matters even more, the problem gets even worse the more you start clambering around. Once you start navigating walls and ceilings, the camera becomes a disorientating nightmare, which inevitably has you crawling in what you think is the right direction, only for you to discover you're nowhere near where you wanted to be and facing in entirely the wrong direction. Granted, you do get used to the way the camera works, and there is a *Zelda*-style camera lock to help you out with some of the bosses (a feature that has you wondering whether, after playtesting, Treytarch realised the camera was rubbish), but like it or not, it's simply *way* off the pace when it comes to keeping up with Spider-Man, and – at worst – it can cripple the fluidity of the experience as a whole.

> **"THE CAMERA IS THE FIRST THING THAT THREATENS TO RUIN YOUR ENJOYMENT OF THE GAME"**

GAME ON

Camera problems aside, *Spider-Man: The Movie* is fairly enjoyable, though falls short of being spectacular. The structure of the game itself is simple enough. Gameplay styles are divided into two main types: the



NO WAY, MAN! The radioactive spider that bites Peter Parker in the movie is actually a deadly Black Widow that was painted blue and red by a professional (and no-doubt carpet-munchingly insane) 'spider wrangler'. Zoiks!

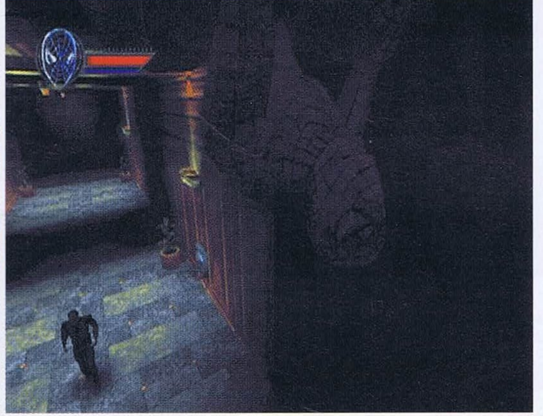
FIELD OF PLAY

Examining *Spider-Man*'s most exhilarating moment…

JUST LOOK AT IT!
You have to admit, this is pretty stunning. A beautiful sunset, towering skyscrapers, oodles of speed and a deranged idiot flying around in a green leotard. Not something you see every day.

PARTY ON
Stranded on a giant Panda-Blimp is the lovely Mary Jane – below, a street party continues unabated. Swing down there and rescue your lady-friend before the Green Goblin glides in and blasts her to her doom.





free-roaming open cityscape sections, and the internal environments. The cityscapes require you to swing through the air, scale buildings and run over rooftops. You're normally given a simple mission objective, such as destroying a set number of hover-drones or beating up a bunch of roof-bound goons, before following the radar to a Spidey symbol hidden on a rooftop – once you've found this you're whisked off to an internal level. The city levels are, for the most part, the most enjoyable of the level styles, primarily because of the sheer exhilaration you get from swinging between towering skyscrapers, but also because of the immense sense of freedom on offer. Most notable is the speed and grace with which you can move through the level – but also the feeling that it's unlike anything non-Spidey games have to offer.



THE SCORE

At the end of every level you're graded on how well you fought, the secrets you found and pick-ups you used. The better you do, the more bonus points you acquire, allowing you to unlock new costumes, skins and characters to play through the game as. Unfortunately, they're not quite incentive enough to make you want to play Spider-Man again.

Take, for example, the encounter with bad guy The Vulture. In this particular instance you have to chase him though the city, dropping onto rooftops to secure damaged billboards and water tanks with your web-shot before continuing the chase. Once you've caught up with The Vulture, you have to battle it out in mid-air, knock him onto a roof, and then jump down yourself to deliver some well-placed smackage. Moments such as this stand head and shoulders above anything that the rest of the game has to offer – namely the ground-based indoor levels.

One you're inside a building it's all familiar gaming territory. You'll be required to beat up goons, protect innocent civilians, root out keys for locked doors and solve very basic puzzles of the switch-flipping, place-

HEAR YEA THE VOICE OF SATAN



You may recall us saying that Sonic Adventure 2 *had the worst voice-acting in videogaming history. Well, now a new world standard has been set – in the form of* Spider-Man: The Movie. *Never before have we encountered a game where the speech is so far removed from the on-screen action, as the voices sound as though they were recorded in a bathroom before being chucked in willy-nilly. Just to make matters worse, the speech constantly repeats itself and the 'jokes' are terrible, with side-splitting howlers such as "Wow, squirrels must love you – because you're nuts!" But the pain doesn't end there – oh no. The voice of Spider-Man himself sounds like he really can't be bothered to try, with one monotone quip after another. If we were Treyarch, we'd have locked Tobey Maguire in a room and continually flogged him until he bucked his ideas up.*



FROM ZERO... TO HERO

"IT WASN'T ALWAYS UNCOMFORTABLY TIGHT LYCRA AND DISTRESSED DAMSELS YOU KNOW," SAYS VETERAN WEB-SLINGER SPIDER-MAN. "THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WAS BUT A CAREFREE TEENAGER, WITH THE WORLD AS MY OYSTER..."

MY DAYS WERE SPENT SWINGING LEISURELY THROUGH THE CITY...

"NOW, IF I CAN HOCK UP ENOUGH GREENER, MAYBE I CAN..."

MAN, THIS TAKES FRICKIN AGES! I'M KNACKERED...

...SCALING WALLS FOR MY DAILY EXERCISE...

SHE'LL NEVER SPOT ME FROM HERE, HE HEH! ALMOST THERE.

...AND INDULGING IN MY NUMBER-ONE PASTIME.

BUT THAT'S WHERE IT ALL WENT WRONG. JUST AS I WAS FINISHING UP MY DAILY DUTIES...

EEEE! WHAT ARE YOU? SOME KIND OF PREVERT?

YUP, ALL SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER MISS.

YOU OKAY, MISS? HEY... YOU! HAVE SOME OF THAT, FREAK-FEATURES!

OOOF! THAT HURTS... BUT I LIKE IT!

...HORRIBLY, HORRIBLY WRONG



ON DISCOVERING MY NEW-FOUND LUST FOR DISHING OUT SMACKAGE, I THOUGHT IT WAS ABOUT TIME I GOT ROUND TO FINDING MY UNCLE'S KILLER. AFTER BEATING THE CRAP OUT OF LEGIONS OF IDENTICAL THUGS, I EVENTUALLY GOT THE FIRST LEAD TO FINDING THE SUSPECT...

ONCE INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE, I FOUND THAT THE SHAMELESS CROOKS HAD LEFT HANDY TIPS ON HOW TO SMASH THEIR FACES IN...

OI, SPIDER-MAN! HIDE IN THE SHADOWS TO AVOID DETECTION!

TA VERY MUCH, MATEY!

RIGHT THEN, PUNKS. I WANNA SEE YOU DANCE...

...THAT'S RIGHT! I SAID DANCE YOU IDIOTS! DAAAAANCE!!! AHEM.

ONCE I'D GOT THE HANG OF THIS WEBBING AND PUNCHING GUFF I WAS HAVING A WHALE OF A TIME...

A FEW FLIPPED SWITCHES AND FUSES HERE AND THERE, AND I'D MANAGED TO INFILTRATE DEEPER INTO THE HIDEOUT...





ONCE I FOUND THE KILLER, I DID THE MOST HONOURABLE, COURAGEOUS THING POSSIBLE... I HID LIKE A WUSS AND HOPED TO MIKE HE DIDN'T SEE ME.

WELL IF YOUR HEALTH WAS IN THE YELLOW, WHAT WOULD YOU DO, PAL?! GIMME A BREAK!

SURPRISE!!!

THEN, JUST WHEN THE TIME WAS RIGHT...



...BLAMMO! I GOT BOTH BARRELS OF HIS SHOTGUN IN MY FACE...

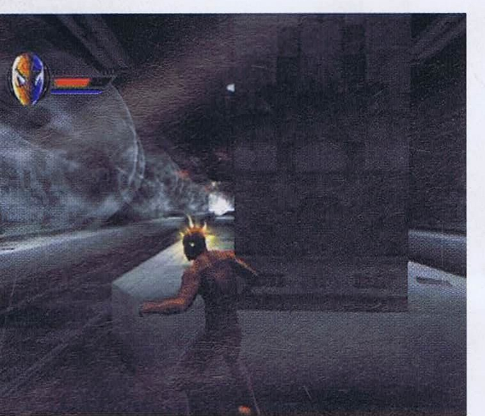
CAN I HAVE MY SKIN-TIGHT RUBBER SUIT BACK NOW, PLEASE? HELLO? ANYONE?

AH WELL, BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME...

SPIDER MAN: THE MOVIE

The definitive review of Spider-Man's sense-tingling Gamecube debut

△ There are always different approaches and tactics to every given situation.



△ The Spidey sense kicks in when there's danger approaching. Take note…

FIGHTING FORCE

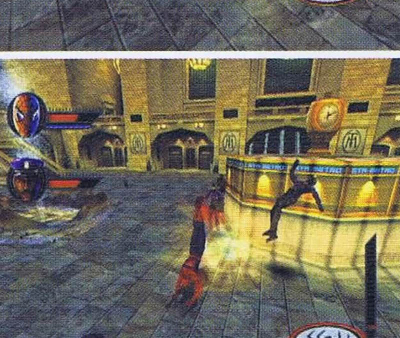
As Spider-Man, you have three basic attacking manoeuvres at your disposal (aside from your standard web-slinging abilities). To start off with you only have a handful of attacks to use, but through thorough exploration of the surrounding environment you can uncover plenty of additional combos as you progress through the game. By using combinations of jump, punch and attack you can execute different multi-hitting combos to defeat your enemies. Naturally, different enemies are more susceptible to different attacks – it's up to you to experiment and decide which is best for every situation.

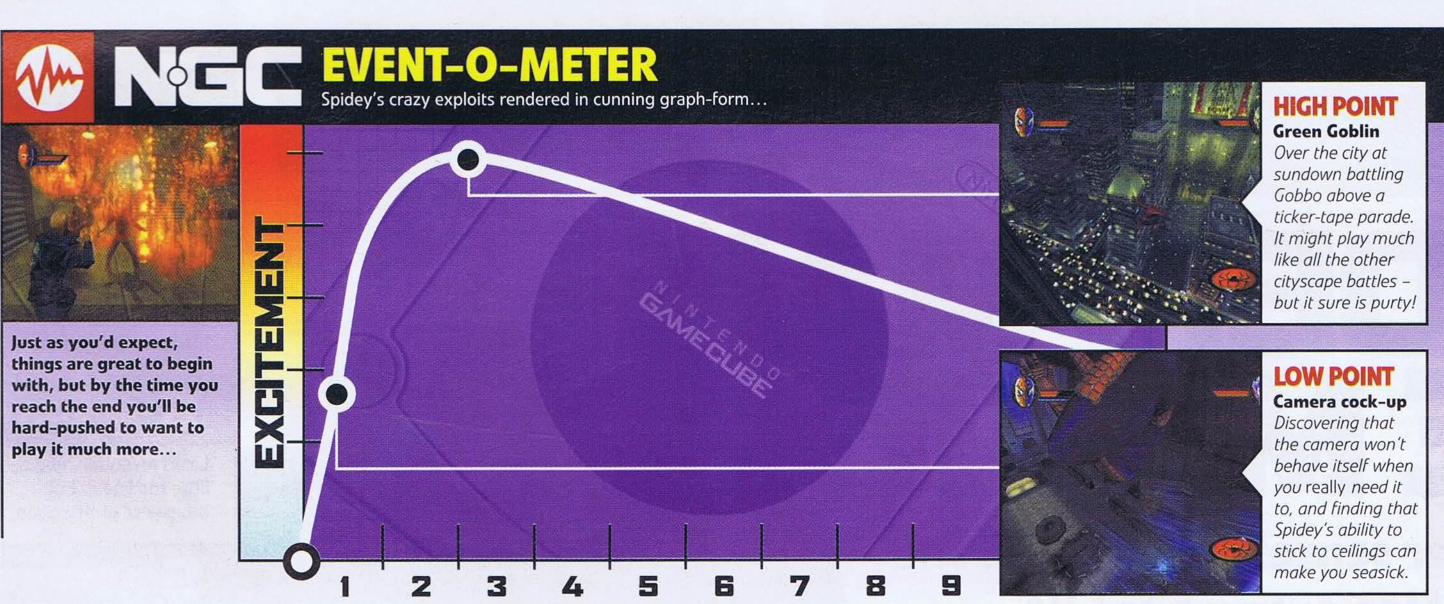












missing-object-A-in-slot-B variety. As you progress through the level you'll be able to pick up Spidey symbols, which add a new combo to your repertoire of moves, making dealing with large packs of enemies a little easier. Once you've worked your way through the area, you can expect a boss encounter before returning to the cityscape for more vertigo-inducing action – and that's essentially it. Diversifying the experience somewhat are some interesting sub-goals to achieve, such as chasing people down, avoiding detection by crawling in shadows and vents, and carrying civilians away from potentially lethal situations. They might not be the most inspired or well-executed objectives you'll have the pleasure of playing, but at least they go some way to stopping the game from feeling stagnant – more importantly, they manage to hold your attention a little longer than in games such as, say, Ubi Soft's *Batman Vengeance*.

ALL WRAPPED UP

That said, there's not much ground here that hasn't been covered before. In fact, it all bears a spooky resemblance to innumerable past N64/PSX/DC *Spider-Man* games, albeit while looking a hell of a lot nicer.

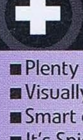
The game's progression is certainly compelling enough, and you'll have a genuine desire to see it through to the end, but this has a lot to do with the fact that the levels themselves are so short you don't really have time to get bored of them, and because the 'puzzles' are so simple, and the internal levels so linear, you'll never find yourself wandering around aimlessly. It almost seems as though the moment you start a level, you're whisked back to the save screen before starting another. This not only breaks up the flow of the game, but it also makes things a little too easy – if you die, you never have to re-do anything that's particularly tough or long-winded. In the example of the encounter with The Vulture, the chase scene and the battle itself is broken into two parts, with a save point in the middle – it would perhaps have been much better if Treyarch combined the two sections into a single ongoing battle.

Spider-Man is competent enough, then, it'll please you if you're a fan of the comics, and there's probably just *about* enough variety in the experience. But, if you were hoping for a sprawling, mind-blowing platform adventure that does proper justice to the licence, you'll be sorely disappointed.

GERAINT EVANS

TRAINING

If you need to get to grips with the finer points of Spider-Man's controls then get yourself over to the Training mode. This is, strangely enough, quite entertaining. It's not really necessary to go through it because the first level of the game acts as a tutorial in itself, but this training mode proves quite good fun – in a time-trial kind of way.



- Plenty of variety.
- Visually slick.
- Smart city levels.
- It's Spider-Man!



- Camera problems.
- Short, easy levels.
- Not a whole lot of replay value.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Batman Vengeance
Ubi Soft
NGC/67 70%
More above-average superhero action.



8 VISUALS
No complaints. Plenty of detail, plenty of speed and plenty of colour.

5 SOUNDS
Worst. Voice. Acting. Ever. Music and spot FX aren't *too* bad…

6 MASTERY
It's slick, but the camera needs an overhaul. Still, it does the job. Kind of.

6 LIFESPAN
Not hard and not long. Once you've finished it, you won't return.

VERDICT

Not bad, but not ground-breaking either. It'll please fans, but the camera and poor re-playability lets the side down.



NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

72

"The level of animation on Spidey is very pleasing"



Dumb super-villains such as the Vulture may need wires to stay airborne, but this is still pretty tough going.








Fairly pedestrian platforming, but it's no *Jurassic Park*.



Nice to see Spidey's 'funny' asides are present and correct.



Kreesh? The web-slinging freak dishes odd-noise justice.

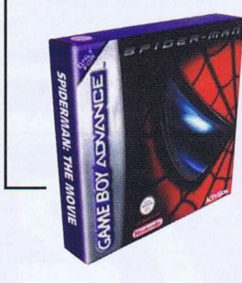
SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE

It makes Spider sense! Well, kind of. The second Spider-Man outing hits GBA.



INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	DIGITAL ECLIPSE
PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE-CART LINK-UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£35





As inevitable as it was that *Spider-Man: The Movie* would make it to GBA, adding yet another film license to the handheld's magnificently fulsome line-up, we're really not too fussed. Activision and Digital Eclipse have a good track record when it comes to converting Spidey to the small screen – and they've managed to pull it off once again.

The only major downside with this latest instalment is that it's simply more of the same. Still, if you enjoyed the previous titles (as we did), then this is easily forgiven. Basically, you have to navigate a series of levels using Spidey's unique abilities to explore and dispatch bad guys. All the usual skills are present and correct: web attacks, wall-clinging, zip-lining, swinging and punch-kick comboing are all in attendance to help you stealth or smack your way through every stage. And just as before, the level of animation on Spider-Man himself is very remarkable considering the format.

In terms of level construction, though, things are a little different this time round. Unlike last time, where you could choose your next destination, the game takes on a far more linear approach. But there are a few more variations in objectives to help keep things interesting, like escaping from a crumbling building, rescuing hostages or disarming bombs. There are also a number of bonuses to be sought out, such as photographing certain incidents that take place as you progress through the level. Once you've beaten a couple of levels, it's on to a tricky boss encounter before moving on to the next area and an all-new objective.

Aside from that, there's not much else to say about this handheld *Spider-Man: The Movie* – it's all pretty familiar territory. What's here, though, is solid stuff. The collision detection is spot on, there's a decent enough challenge, the visuals are nicely drawn and it's sufficiently engaging to keep you from getting too bored too quickly. If it's a Spidey game you're after, you'll find much to enjoy here – even if it *is* just about identical to its prequel.

GERAINT EVANS



- Smart bonus levels.
- Plenty of challenge.
- Lovely-looking.
- Solid level design.

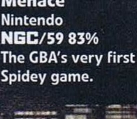
–

- Not very original.
- Except for some minor tweaks, the same as the last Spider-game.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Mysterio's Menace
Nintendo
NGC/59 83%
The GBA's very first Spidey game.




7 VISUALS
Some smart animation on Spidey and the backgrounds are nice.

7 SOUNDS
Again, nothing special, but the effects are fitting to the game.

6 MASTERY
Lacks invention, and a little too linear, but otherwise pretty good.

6 LIFESPAN
You'll beat it with perseverance, but it's doubtful you'll go back.

VERDICT

Solid stuff that's lacking in originality and a sense of adventure, but if you're a big Spidey fan it's hard to fault.



75

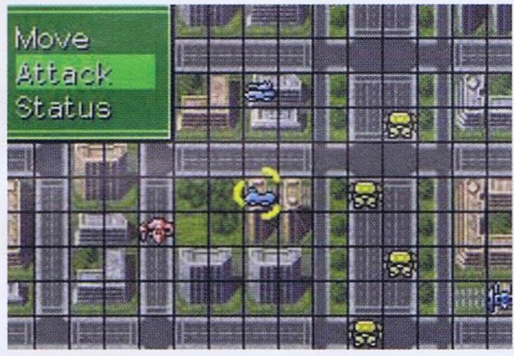
"*ZOE* pales in comparison to *Advance Wars*"



△ The clunky fighting sequences are as fun as eating mud.



△ Some of the 'incredible' pre-game menu screens.



△ Menus pop up seemingly at random.



△ Dull top-down map views are where you spend most of the game.



△ Miss and you'll have to sit there and get shot to bits next turn. Yawn.



△ This red splodge shows you the range of your selected weapon.



△ Blammo! Slide the target around the screen until it's over the LEV's head, hit A, and it's Cheers Johnny Five…

ZONE OF THE ENDERS THE FIST OF MARS



INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	KONAMI
PUBLISHER	KONAMI
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART LINK-UP	NO
SAVE	ON-CART
GBA LINK-UP	NO
WHEN'S IT OUT?	JULY
COST: £30	



Ender the road? Could be, as you fly giant robots and indulge in tedious strategy nonsense…

If you said to us 18 months ago that a turn-based strategy game would turn out to be the best game available for the GBA, we'd have laughed heartily in your face before bludgeoning you to a bloody pulp with soiled copies of *Superman 64*. But *Advance Wars* is indeed a thing of brilliance, and it's made a genre that was long the province of Davros-like PC owners exciting again.

So here's the first clone. Spinning off from a PS2 game that featured big robots and little else, *ZOE: Fist of Mars* is a turn-based strategy affair that pales in comparison to *Advance Wars'* beautifully designed battle-wonder. The meat of the game sees you assigning unit-to-unit attacks, moving around a grid-based area and indulging in seen-it-all-before strategy yawn. So far, so pedestrian; it lacks the fizz, subtleties and options available in *AW*.

No, the gimmick here is that when you are attacked, you're faced with a quasi-3D battle screen where you have to pin a crosshair on a moving enemy and then hammer the A-button to fire. It's fun for 30 seconds, but eventually you realise it's the only move available to you. And when you're attacked, you have to play out a defensive move; it's too simplistic to be of any lasting fun, and it's ultimately nothing more than a major irritation. What's worse is the storyline, and the endless, eye-bleeding conversations. The initial exposition takes literally five long minutes to skip through, let alone actually *read*. Awful.

That said, *ZOE* is a big game if you can make the effort to appreciate it, and if you can put up with the clunky interface and outmoded design. The bottom line, however, is that there's no earthly reason for this to exist when we already have *Advance Wars*, except that *Advance Wars* doesn't have giant robots in it.

"ZOE IS A BIG GAME IF YOU MAKE THE EFFORT TO APPRECIATE IT, AND PUT UP WITH THE CLUMSY INTERFACE"

JES BICKHAM



- A huge game.
- Thinking involved.
- Giant robots that fight each other.



- Very, very, very clunky. Very.
- Tedious battles.
- Not as good as *AW*.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Advance Wars
Nintendo
NGC/61 94%
The game that proved excellent RTS was within GBA's reach.



5 VISUALS
Minimal strategy detail, but still has nice big stompy robots.



7 SOUNDS
Great music and effects – probably the most impressive bit, this.

7 MASTERY
A *giant* game, looks nice… impressive use of GBA hardware.



4 LIFESPAN
Will last you ages… if you can be bothered to stick with it.

VERDICT

A decent stab at sci-fi strategy, but it's clumsy and dull when you compare it to the infinitely superior *Advance Wars*.



52

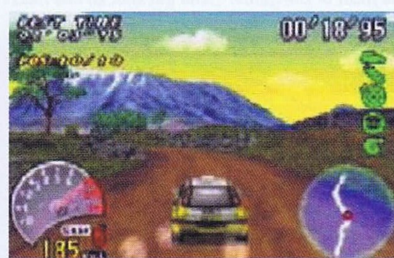
"*V-Rally 3* wouldn't look out of place on PlayStation"

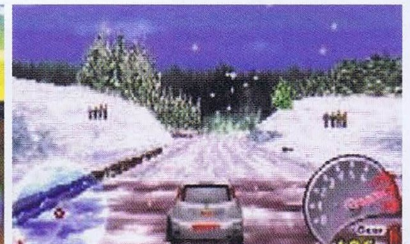


Quite simply, one of the tastiest lookers we've seen on the GBA yet.



It's almost as if they've jammed a PlayStation into a GBA cartridge. Y'know, *almost*.



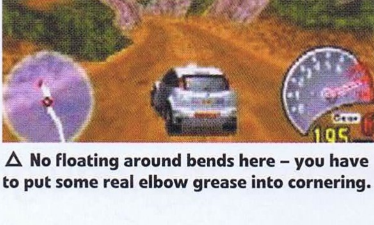




There's even an in-car view for self-styled hardcore rallyist types.



V-RALLY 3

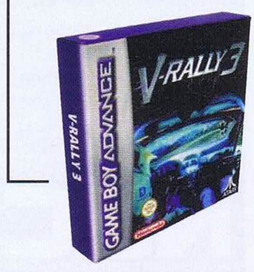


No floating around bends here – you have to put some real elbow grease into cornering.



INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	INFOGRAMES
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£35



Sega Rally on GBA, anyone? Well, not quite… but closer than you think.

After seeing an early build of this, we were a little dubious about its quality, hence our comment in last month's *GTA2* review. But as it turns out, *V-Rally 3* has improved a great deal – so much so that it's virtually impossible not to be impressed by this latest GBA driver.

This latest version of the famous rally series is certainly one of the best-looking GBA games we've seen this year, and it wouldn't have looked completely out of place among the PlayStation's first-generation titles. Yup, the visuals really are that accomplished – you even have the option of an in-car view, rare indeed for a handheld racer. What's more, all the tracks are constructed out of nicely textured polygons that move along with alarming fluidity. Granted, the draw distance isn't the most impressive you're ever likely to see, but then again, this *is* on GBA, and it's hardly detrimental to the experience as a whole.

BURN RUBBER

Thankfully, Infogrames have taken care to ensure *V-Rally 3* plays just as well as it looks. It can be a little sluggish in places – although that often depends on which surface you're racing on and how good you are – but on the whole it's a thoroughly enjoyable experience that conveys the ruggedness of off-road racing brilliantly. On the harder courses, you really do have to brake hard to wrestle your car around the tight corners and concentrate on your approach to tricky bends, making the high-speed racing a lot more involving than your normal handheld fare – which is exactly the way we like it.

To keep proceedings interesting, you also have all the usual details and extras, such as real-life cars, unlockable vehicles, a garage where you can tune your motor to perfection, a range of performance-altering weather effects, time trial and multiplayer modes as well as a simultaneous four-car race around tracks rather than courses. The choice on offer is staggering, with more than enough to get your teeth into.

Our only gripe is that because of the subtlety of the visuals, it's very difficult to see what's going on unless you've got plenty of light. We all know the GBA's screen is dim, so maybe game designers should be compensating for that better by now. Scenery is so detailed you have to watch it really closely – not always possible in a race.

Still, *V-Rally 3* is as close to *Sega Rally* as a GBA game is likely to get. Absolutely great.

GERAINT EVANS



- Some of the best visuals yet seen on GBA.
- Tough rally action.
- Great multiplayer.



- Bit hard to see what's going on at times.
- Not as fast as other racers such as *GTA 2*.

IF YOU LIKE THIS…

GT Advance 2
THQ
NGC/68 84%
A month ago, this was the best rally game on GBA…



9 VISUALS
Amazing. Who'd have though the GBA was capable of so much?



6 SOUNDS
A little speech here and there, and decent engine noises for GBA.



9 MASTERY
Slick and gorgeous to look at – a fantastic use of the GBA's power.



8 LIFESPAN
Plenty of modes, a good challenge and an enjoyable multiplayer.

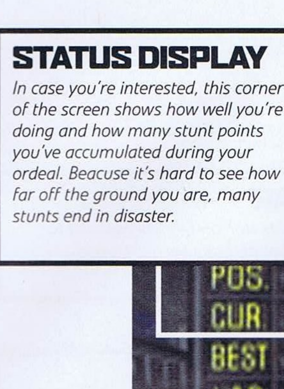
VERDICT

It's clear that a lot of care has gone into this. Definitely one of the GBA's finest racers – and, as a result, an essential purchase.





"It doesn't even come close to matching *Excitebike* on the NES"

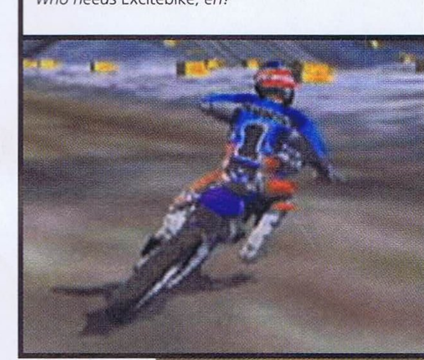


STATUS DISPLAY
In case you're interested, this corner of the screen shows how well you're doing and how many stunt points you've accumulated during your ordeal. Beacuse it's hard to see how far off the ground you are, many stunts end in disaster.

STAY ON COURSE
Clip the wrong part of a corner and the game will think you're going the wrong way around the track.



BIKE ON A STICK
The bike slides eerily across the screen when making small adjustments to the steering, or by applying a bit of shoulder button it can be made to slide eerily across the screen at a steeper angle. Who needs Excitebike*, eh?*





LAWNMOWER MAN
Off-road bikes aren't the fastest things in the world, but there ought to be at least a fleeting sensation of speed and limit-pushing control as you rattle over rough ground at more than 60mph. There should be. But not in this game.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD

Belching noxious fumes from its lawnmower engine… is this Gamecube's dodgiest racer yet?

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	ACCLAIM
PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	9
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
The PAL version is out now – it's also available on NTSC. Great.

COST: £40



Excitebike for Gamecube? Yeah, right. The only things *Jeremy McGrath Supercross World* has in common with Nintendo's classic are motorbikes and mud. As a videogame, it doesn't even come close to matching the NES version of *Excitebike*, let alone the fantastic N64 sequel.

The bikes handle like they're not stuck to the ground, as if they're cardboard cutouts attached to sticks, with the terrain rolling below. Steer gently, and the bike and rider slide sideways across the screen, bolt upright. You can get the same effect by sitting in the passenger seat of a moving car and holding a toy bike up to the window.

DRIVEN MAD

The course design is equally bad. The murky graphics and shuddering framerate make it hard to differentiate between the track and the no-go areas either side, and if you accidentally cut a corner, you'll be given three seconds to find your way back and drive around it properly. Cheers for that.

Other strange and irritating phenomena include invisible walls that catapult your poorly animated character hundreds of metres through the air, and a camera that can't cope with hills – when you drive down a steep one, the bike vanishes off the bottom of the screen. Oh, and let's not forget the handful of appallingly designed corners that make the Gamecube-controlled riders crash – every single time.

It's all incredibly shoddy, and given the fact that it's a Gamecube title, even less impressive than the old N64 version (which was lucky to escape with an average 53 way back in issue 40). If you're desperate for a motocross game, get yourself a second-hand N64 and a copy of *Excitebike 64*, which dumps on *Jeremy McGrath* from a massive and potentially fatal height. Rubbish.

MARTIN KITTS



△ **Follow the giant grey arrow as it guides you through the off-road Baja courses.**



- It has a soundtrack.
- It has more than one game mode.
- GC's only MX game.



- Nasty controls.
- Evil graphics.
- Mind-numbingly rubbish course design.

IF YOU LIKE THIS…
Excitebike 64
Nintendo
NGC/43 90%
Far-superior off-road racing, in a game you can actually play.



2 VISUALS
Flat textures, unstable framerate, plenty of pop-up – it's all here.

3 SOUNDS
Whiny sub-punk music and engine making hairdryer noises.

1 MASTERY
The only thing this game has mastered is sub-mediocrity.

2 LIFESPAN
Play it once, then see if the shop will be kind enough to have it back.

VERDICT
A game that sucks hard enough to take the chrome off a nicely polished exhaust pipe. Avoid with all your strength.





"There's something strangely camp about the entire process"

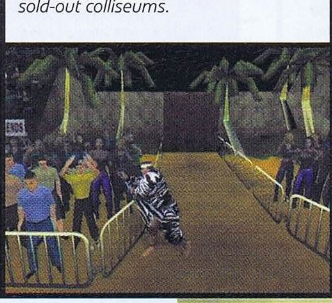
COMBO BAR
Press the highlighted button at the right moment to string together combos and counter moves.

POWER BAR
It's the good old-fashioned power bar, which decreases as your wrestler takes damage. When it goes red, it's time to pin them down.

DIZZY WRESTLER
After a few consecutive blows, a wrestler will go all dizzy and dazed. Now's the time to grab them and pull off those real high-octane power moves.



ARENA
Work your way up from fighting in half-empty gymnasiums to headlining sold-out colliseums.



LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

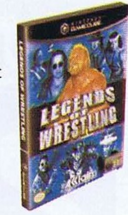
Incredible Hulk! Ol' Hogan is back – with a couple of his grandpa mates – for rasslin' olden-days style. Shame it's a bit dump.

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	ACCLAIM
PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	17
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
Legends of Wrestling is out now in the UK, as well as in the US of A.

COST: £40



It's bizarre. Totally unbelievable, even. On the big television screen, American wrestling is a gourmet feast of over-the-top moves, pizzaz and corny showmanship. In *Legends of Wrestling*, the same activity is transformed into a dull and banal slug-fest featuring pant-wearing geriatrics. Disappointing when you consider Gamecube would be the ideal setting for some top notch rasslin' action.

Things start out looking good, as the lack of a WWF licence means that many of those old-school greats from the late 80s US wrestling scene have been dusted down and brought back for another round – think Hulk Hogan, Brett 'The Hitman' Hart and Ted Dibiase, 'The Million Dollar Man'. Unfortunately, by the time you realise that there's no Jake and his dubious snake or 'Macho Man' Randy Savage, your brain snaps out of a pleasant nostalgia trip and the game mechanics kick in.

COLLISION COURSE

Now ambiguous collision detection in the televised ring is one thing, but in a game it's a crime against humanity. And on that count, *Legends of Wrestling* is guilty as charged. This inherent lack of precision means that games all too quickly dissolve into a case of bash the buttons first, think about what strategy to use later.

Likewise, when more than two wrestlers are in the ring, it's a sheer lottery as to which one the game decides to let you attack. Planning to sneak up and lamp the back of Jimmy 'Superfly' Snuka's fat head, only to see the blow fall on 'The Birdman' Koko B Ware, may not seem a disaster, but in the context of the game's Career mode, it's highly frustrating. It doesn't exactly make for considered, tension-packed gameplay, either.

Admittedly, the design team deserves a hearty slap on their backs for implementing a new twist on the combo system – once you're in a grapple, press the buttons that flash up on screen as in a dance sim – but even if you find success at this, the pay-off in seeing the moves performed is a disappointing one. There's simply

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

Seconds out for the Gamecube's first grapple-fest





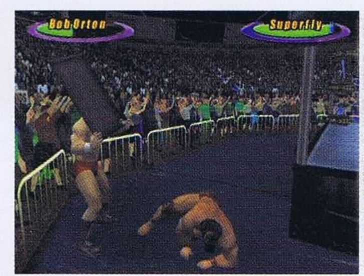




△ Looks like the Hulkster's in a spot of trouble. Hope the other guy washed before he came out.

WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION

Hidden under that wrestling ring lies all manner of weaponry…









HUH-ONE-AH…

First up, you've got your staple wrestling tool: the Foldable Metal Chair. Made of a special blend of alloys, it's light enough to pick up, yet still delivers a crushing blow.

TWO-AH…

Long, thin and very brown in colour, the Big Stick trades power for length and is perfect for smacking across someone's chops. Not that we'd know about that sort of thing.

THREE-AH…

Those from the rougher suburbs will be all too familiar with the attacking potential of the Metal Dustbin, and here it lives up to its status as the bulky prop of choice.

…AND HE'S OUT!

Last seen retailing in popular high-street catalogue outlets for a very reasonable £39.99, this high-quality musical item is the unsung hero of the wrestling weapons world.

none of the flashy flair and downright ludicrousness in the game's execution that you'd tend to expect from someone named Ricky 'The Dragon' Steamboat. And surely that's what wrestling is all about, isn't it?

starched white suit with red hearts on it, while motivating you with choice lines such as, "Baby, keep it up." But if we're talking camp comedy, why not go completely over the top and make the whole game

> **"AMBIGUOUS COLLISION DETECTION IN THE TELEVISED RING IS ONE THING, BUT IN A GAME IT'S A CRIME"**

There's also something strangely camp about the whole process – and by that, we don't just mean the sight of grown men slipping into skin-tight leotards. Most moves involve various proximities of what we'll tastefully call crotch-sniffing, and in career mode your trusty manager – a good ol' boy from the South – insists on sporting a outlandish and full of amateur dramatics? As it is, there's little on offer in *Legends of Wrestling* to satisfy your appetite for a bit of unadulterated showmanship.

Longevity is promised through the inclusion of a career mode, which sees your chosen steroid-enhanced wrestler fight their way around the world. After every match, you're given an entertainment rating based on the variety of moves you used and combos pulled off. In order to expand your horizons and contend planet-wide, you'll need to bump this up to become more popular with the fans. After all, as Homer Simpson once said, "Being popular is the most important thing in the world."

But the popularity of *wrestling* shouldn't fool you into thinking this has anything more to offer than a bit of misty-eyed nostalgia. Sure, a lot of less-discerning wrestling fans will lap this up, whatever it plays like, on the basis of it being another grappler. But, while the lure of fighting as Hulk Hogan may be great to some, it doesn't rescue the game to the rest of us who, after the brilliant N64 *WWFs*, expect much more.

Our advice? Wait for *WWE X8* in October.

PHILIP MYLNAR



DRESS YOU UP IN MY LOVE

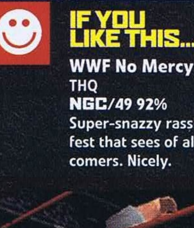
What's a wrestling game without a create-a-wrestler option? Nothing, that's what. Fortunately Legends comes up trumps on this front. Not only can you choose the bog-standard costume colour and wrestler size options, but you can customise down to details such as what style of gloves or belt to wear.



- Play as classic characters.
- Career mode increases game length.

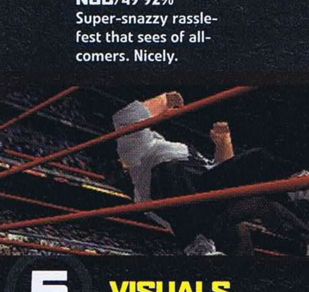


- Very poor graphics.
- Ropey gameplay.
- Monotony doesn't take long to set in.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

WWF No Mercy
THQ
NGC/49 92%
Super-snazzy rassle-fest that sees of all-comers. Nicely.



5 VISUALS

Slow, sluggish, with shockingly random collision detection.

3 SOUNDS

No in-game speech. No crowd chants. No crunching impacts.

5 MASTERY

A game that looks like it could run on an N64 without sweating.

5 LIFESPAN

An interesting combo system is ruined by a lack of variety.

VERDICT

A missed opportunity, with classic characters and twists on the combo system let down by poor visuals and game mechanics.





"You're unlikely to pass Charles, Harry or Wills on these pistes…"



SSX TRICKY

Top of the board… Grab your kagoul, dust off your afro wig and prepare for an ice scream!

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	EA BIG
PUBLISHER	EA
PLAYERS	2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	5
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
Due out on 21st June, but *SSX* is already available in the United States.

COST: £40

SSX TRICKY

Hit the slopes and prepare for extreme 'boardom'!

MEDAL HONOUR

Achieve one of these progressively fiendish points targets to unlock new levels and extras. You should breeze through the first few levels, but later on you'll need to beef up your character and hone your skills to win gold.

IT'S TRICKY!

With your Tricky gauge pumped to the maximum it's time to bust one of your special moves. Land one of these babies and you'll have points coming out of your butt.

RAIL WAY

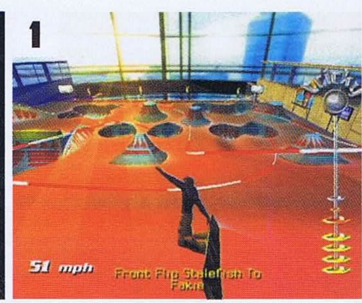
It takes practice to exploit rails – even mounting them at all can be a problem at first. Once you gain confidence enough to balance easily, try using the D-pad to spin as you go, then throw in some jumping spins.

GET SHORTY

Bust through that board for a time-saving shortcut. Be warned – this might be the wrong way to go if you're after mega points. If you exploit these in a race, however, you'll leave your safeboardin' rivals for dust…

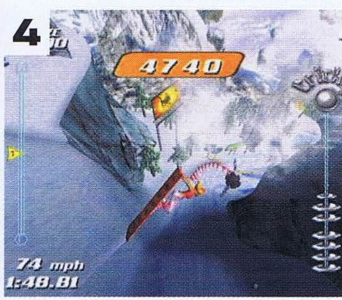
ALL THE MODES

Well, nearly all of them. There are four main ways to play SSX Tricky – Practice (1) lets you freestyle on unlocked slopes; Two-player (2) allows you to elbow a friend into oblivion; Race (3) is a straight sprint for glory; and Show-off (4) directly rewards you for pulling outlandish tricks.

1


2


3


4


GET INTO THE GAME

First, you're gonna need some skills. Check out the Tricks Book…

SHOW ME

Before you attempt Tricky's trouser-ripping manoeuvres get a pro from the game to show you how it's done. This way you can see which buttons pull which tricks and find out how to bust winning combos.

PERFORM

Now you can try the moves in laboratory conditions on a hassle-free ramp. When you hit the slopes the pressure to rack up points and interference from elbowing rivals make things ten times trickier…



Little could the first pioneers have known that, the moment they lashed a door to their snowshoes and ran over a bunch of toffee-nosed skiers in Pringle sweaters, they'd create a sport that, years later, would be followed like a religion. A dangerous, leg-breaking religion, admittedly, but a religion all the same.

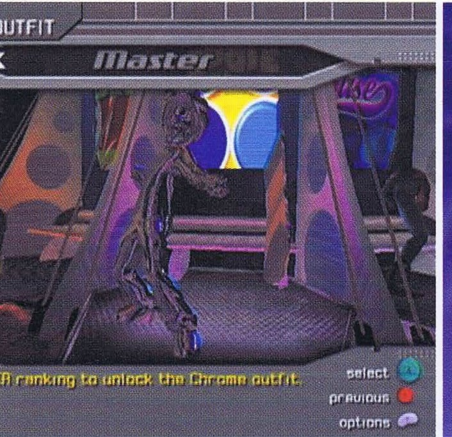
Unsurprisingly, then, the sport has been impersonated in videogames ever since, and yet that spirit of total lunacy has never *quite* been captured. Even the N64 classic *1080°* was more realistic than sadistic. So, here to turn that history of failure, and hosts of insane boarders, on its head is *SSX Tricky*.

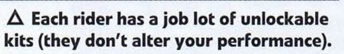
As a converted PS2 title, *Tricky* is certainly a little rough around the edges, but it's a game built for fun and it's built to last. In place of realism comes a celebration of combined stunts and daredevil antics. Pulling off tricks at breakneck speeds boosts a 'Tricky' power gauge to open up so-called Über Tricks: glorious, gravity-defying manoeuvres that would be impossible even on the moon. Cock them up and you'll end up using your planet-sized ginger afro as a rudder, guiding your legs to the bottom of the slope and the awaiting paramedics.

Don't fear, however – even with your head buried under three feet of snow you'll still hear the appreciative roar of the massive crowds gathered to laugh at your misfortune. You see, you're unlikely to pass Charles, Harry and Wills on these pistes. Each course is the realisation of a snowplough-owning madman's fevered imagination. Broken trees and gentle curves are out. Snow-choked city backstreets, knife-



"*Tricky* is a game built for fun, and it's built to last"





△ Each rider has a job lot of unlockable kits (they don't alter your performance).



△ Keep your Tricky meter up by pulling lots of little spins. That way you won't waste mega-ramps by missing out on Über Tricks.



FIELD OF PLAY

Every level has its secrets, but Tokyo is brimful of special switches, shortcuts and other cool stuff...

UNDERGROUND

Hit this switch to open the area below and access a subterranean tunnel that will serve you well in the Race mode. It's not much help when you're trying to rack up mega-points, though.

OVERGROUND

This pimple in the snow is a powerful fan that will propel your board skyward and enable you to hit massive combos – ideal for sneaking in those Über Tricks when you're going for gold.

GAINING GROUND

Up ahead old-skool Mario Kart-style speed strips will boost your rider forwards, leaving a pretty red vapour trail behind them. Get two in a row and you'll be flying.



DAISY CHAIN

There are two regular flavours of trick in SSX Tricky – rail grinds and ramp manoeuvres. Like in other extreme sports the rail tricks involve spinning and balancing on pipes, fences, and anything else with a grindable edge, whereas ramp tricks are spectacular aerial moves. For massive meter-busting points, combine the two by balancing on a rail, leaping into a spin and then landing on another rail...

ÜBER TRICKERY

String together enough outrageous tricks and you'll boost your Tricky meter so high you'll access the Über Tricks. Check out Seeiah's eye-popping specials…



CAN-CAN AIR L + R + B

A deceptively calm-looking move. Seeiah kicks both legs out sideways and glides home.

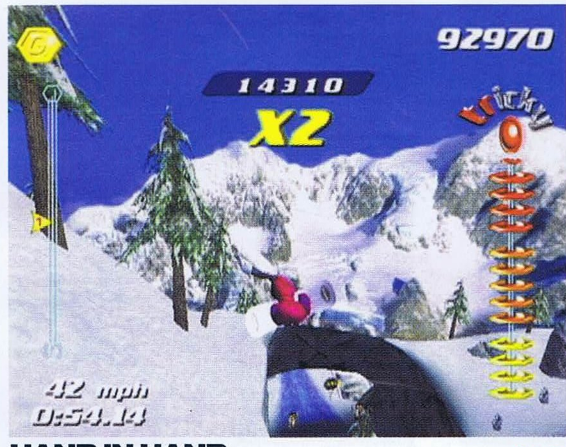
BODY BOARD AIR L + B

Great if you can't get much vertical air, this move involves wrapping your body around the board and spinning wildly.



PROPER PROPELLER AIR Z + B

Our favourite – a spinning effort in which Seeiah sticks the board on her forehead and flies like a propeller plane!



HAND IN HAND R + B

You'll need plenty of space! Seeiah shifts the board between her hands and spins it manically on her toes.

SOUL GRIND AIR R + Z + B

An outrageous double-flip, kicking off with a mid-air backflip. You'll need lots of time to land it.



FREESTYLE ÜBER COMBO Trick + Über Trick

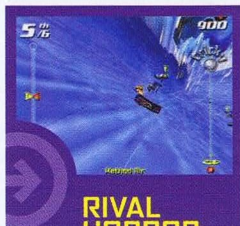
Once you've pulled six Übers you don't need to charge your meter, so get ambitious and combine outrageous tricks with Über moves!

edge wires above lethal precipices, man-made stunt megaplexes and 200-foot ramps are very much in.

The meat of the game, the World Circuit, is split into two modes – Race and Show Off. The Show Off mode is founded on spectacular trickery achieved by combining button presses as you bid for gold, silver and bronze points targets. Hit the gold and you'll unlock cool extras; get into the top three and you'll open the next challenge. In Race mode you jostle against five rivals in a heat, semi-final and then the final – grabbing a medal means you can contest the next fiendish course.

So what's it like to play? Well, due to the celebrity content (voiceovers from a few famous types) and extreme sporting activity, *SSX Tricky* has been compared most frequently to Tony Hawk's skateboarding series. There is a similarity in the gameplay, too, as you boost your riders with stat points earned by completing objectives, and flick the controllers to achieve trick combos.

However, it's in their outrageous addictiveness that the two games are most alike. In *SSX Tricky* you'll unlock new outfits, boards, levels and a string of new characters. You'll also gradually improve your character's ranking from Newbie to Master. And, once you've whizzed through the game picking up a few medals, your thirst for a challenge is quenched by the Trick Book feature, which lists all your character's moves – each ready to be experimented and played around with. Busting these stunts on the slopes not only improves



RIVAL HORROR

To add spice to proceedings you can belt nearby competitors in the chops to give you an edge. Be warned, however – they will not forget your despicable attempts to shunt them out of the race. Make enemies and they won't hesitate to exact their revenge in the next face-off, costing you vital seconds in your quest for supremacy…

> **"BROKEN TREES AND GENTLE CURVES ARE OUT. MAN-MADE STUNT MEGAPLEXES AND 200-FOOT RAMPS ARE VERY MUCH IN"**

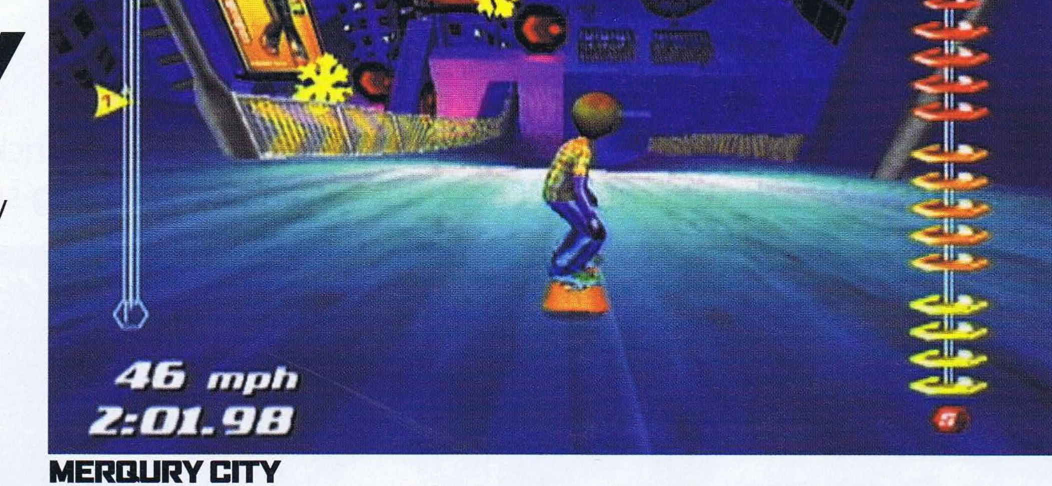




"It's the little touches that keep you hooked"

TRIPLE PLAY

Tricky's mad ski slopes are rammed with challenging obstacles, and there's usually 20 ways to tackle each one…



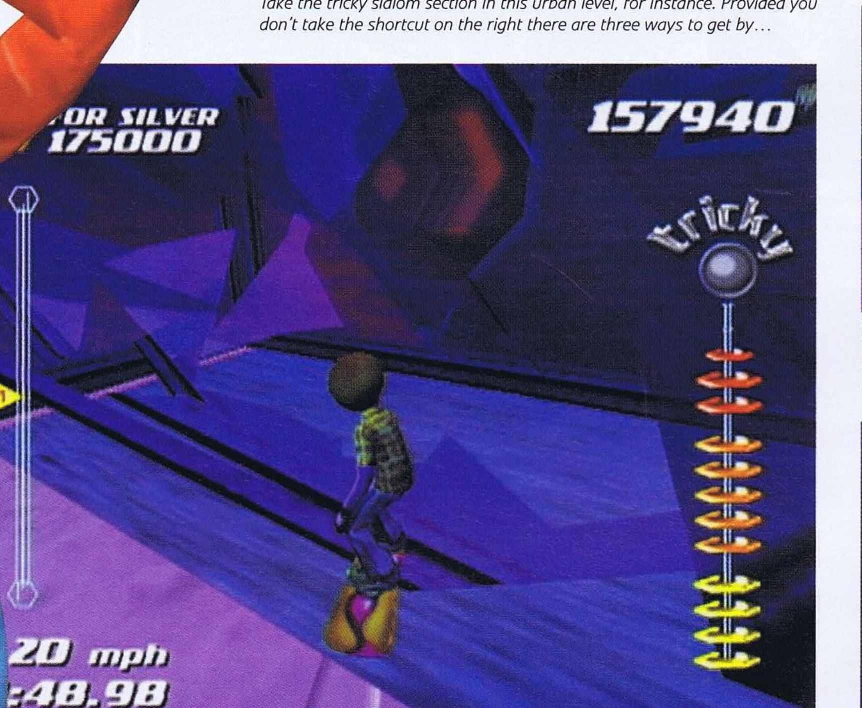
MERQURY CITY

Take the tricky slalom section in this urban level, for instance. Provided you don't take the shortcut on the right there are three ways to get by…



SILVER

Simply drive around the obstacles at a slowish pace to ensure safe passage and wasting too much time.



BRONZE

If all else fails you can always just smash your way through the glass – it'll slow you down, but at least you'll get through.

GOLD

Go full-tilt at each ramp and bust outrageous moves to keep your speed up and boost your Tricky metre.



your skills to enable progression, it also unlocks some of the game's wealth of hidden extras.

LOOKS GOOD

The graphics, by Gamecube standards, are far from impressive. Slow frame-rates and distant pop-up (particularly in the multiplayer mode) are inexcusable. However, the iffy-looking rocks and cut-out crowd members are just a blurred background to the main event – a game rammed with mind-blowingly long courses, ridiculous tricks and speedy fun. Your local games store owner might not fancy demonstrating the power of Nintendo's new super-console with *SSX Tricky*, but once you get it home you'll love the game as if it were a new puppy.

Sadly, it's not just the graphics that mar this potentially ground-breaking game. The controls are rather fiddly at first, as they're ported pretty much directly from the PS2 version. However, smarter players will quickly revert to constantly using the dual purpose D-pad and not both direction controllers. Switching between the two to variously guide your rider, then manipulate their aerial spins, is simply too much to think about at a hair-raising 90 miles per hour.

That criticism aside, the developers have obviously invested in making *SSX Tricky* as accessible and painless as possible. If you get stuck behind a wall a quick tap of the Y-button will reset your position instantly. If you miscue a leap and end up facing the wrong way a mysterious (and merciful) gust of wind will kick-start your progress.

In fact, the game is almost too forgiving, and you'll find it hard to completely lose touch with the leaders. Most forgiving of all are the landings, which allow you to stumble on despite bumping down to earth very awkwardly. However, what this *does* do is maintain the game's flow and a small point deduction means your drive to improve your performance never falters.

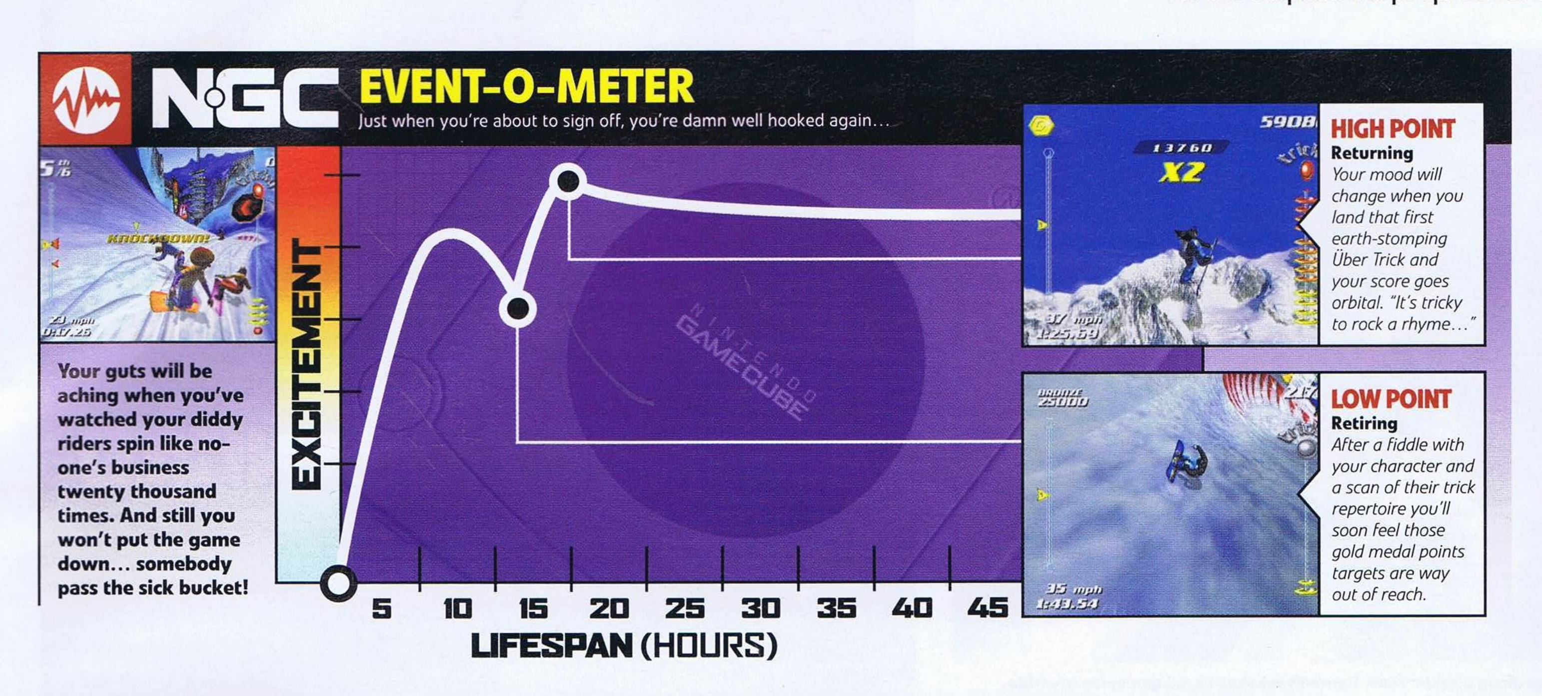
WHAT AN EXPERIENCE

As gamers we want to eke the most fun out of our games as possible. And, guess what? Months after we first reviewed this blighter on import we're still unlocking new



BOARD STUFF

The string of unlockable boards feature four stats that mirror your player's ability. Edging is your ability to turn, Speed is your raw pace, Stability is your ability to balance on rails and Tricks represents your slickness with the moves. Choose your boards carefully and take into account the challenge you face – some are better for races, others boost your ability to bust tricks.



Your guts will be aching when you've watched your diddy riders spin like no-one's business twenty thousand times. And still you won't put the game down... somebody pass the sick bucket!

HIGH POINT
Returning
Your mood will change when you land that first earth-stomping Über Trick and your score goes orbital. "It's tricky to rock a rhyme..."

LOW POINT
Retiring
After a fiddle with your character and a scan of their trick repertoire you'll soon feel those gold medal points targets are way out of reach.

SPEED MERCHANT

You want to progress? You want to progress FAST? Here's our four top tips for keeping your speed up and your opponents down...

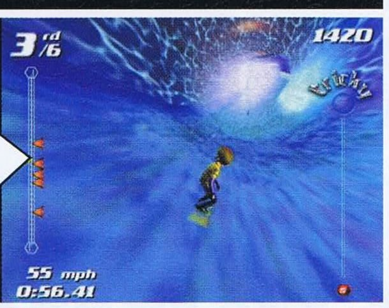
RACING LINE

This game is about as far as you're ever likely to get from a proper snowboarding simulation, but, as with every racing offering out there, finding the shortest route around the course will bear dividends. Rather than slowly following each painfully undulating curve, try to anticipate bends before they appear – you can even cut corners off completely by cheekily leaping between humps.



SHORT OUT

As well as those you mark out for yourself as you get more comfortable with the track layouts, there are also numerous 'official' shortcuts dotted around the course. Look out for the coloured panels of glass with the SSX Tricky logos on them. Smash through them and you'll find secret routes that will hasten your progress and let you try out some insane stuntery on virgin powder.



GRAVITY

On straight sections where sharp turning is less important, hold the A button as if you were preparing to jump – this will lower your rider's centre of gravity and increase their speed more quickly. Also, when you're in a race situation, you should seek out the lowest path forward. After all, the whole thing effectively boils down to a sprint from the top to the bottom of a rather large hill.



SPEED BOOSTS

You can keep up your pace with speed strips, but in SSX Tricky's Race mode speed boosts also appear in the form of spinning power-ups. Look out for brightly coloured globes with tons of yellow lightning flashes on them. Also, it's often worth slowing down a little to collect them – they'll more than compensate for it, giving you an invaluable injection of pure fast-ness that will last a few seconds.

characters and beefing up our existing roster with all the lust we could barely contain in **NGC**/65. Yes, believe it or not, this game gets even better with time.

It's really the experience that keeps you playing. Bouncing off walls, tumbling off chasms and scraping your jaw down sheer cliffs of razor-sharp ice is surprisingly compelling. And just when you're about to quit you spy a gargantuan ramp up ahead. Steeling yourself, you prepare for one last attempt at glory, jam your finger on the joypad, then bust a few choice grabs to send your character jiving through the air in a corkscrewed double front-flip. With the snowy ground racing speedily towards his head disaster begins to loom, but... he... just... makes... it! Phew. A tight squeeze.

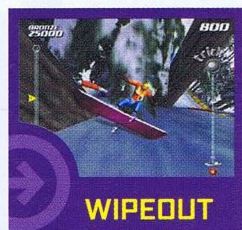
> **"MONTHS AFTER WE REVIEWED SSX ON IMPORT, WE'RE STILL UNLOCKING NEW STUFF... YES, THIS GAME GETS EVEN BETTER WITH TIME"**

What's more, it's the little touches you don't notice that will keep you hooked and bopping to the sway of the game. The way the music fades while you're in the air and kicks back in with full force as RUN DMC rap out "It's tricky to rock a rhyme, it's tricky" as you pull your first Über Trick. The way your rider fists the air in celebration when they land a tricky stunt... it's all there.

Pretty soon you've learned the trick lines that allow you to link grinds and flips in stunning combinations over hundreds of feet of snow, you've opened up secret shortcuts to shave seconds of your time and you feel like an expert. You'll even worry that it's all been too easy and altogether too quick. It's only then that you'll hear the dawn chorus of chirping birds outside your window, look at the clock, and realise you've been playing for ten hours. It's time to make that big decision: play through 'til breakfast or get some shut-eye? Hmm, tough one.

Oh, go on then – just one more go.

LEE HALL



WIPEOUT

Despite all the safeguards, it is going to happen – eventually you'll tumble inescapably towards your impending death. Luckily, you survive every time – handy, that! As you fall, try to right yourself and keep pulling tricks just in case the hand of fate intervenes and you fluke your way into a tree grind. If you do land with a bump, jab Y to instantly set yourself back.



- Dangerously addictive.
- Tons of shortcuts.
- Spectacular trickery.
- Reams of action.



- Disappointing looks.
- A few tricky controls.
- Sometimes it's almost *too* forgiving.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Activision
NGC/67 87%
Almost-as-extreme skateboarding sim.



7 VISUALS
They certainly do the job, but it's very definitely a PS2 game.

8 SOUNDS
Great celebrity voice-acting and much rapping action.

5 MASTERY
Ripped from PS2, and it's a little worse for the conversion.

10 LIFESPAN
You won't rest until you unlock everything. EVERYTHING!

VERDICT
***SSX Tricky* throws realism out of the window and embraces pure arcade fun. Do what you have to – buy this game now!**







"*Dark Summit* is a hopelessly inferior *SSX*-alike"



Storming the HQ by grinding along a cable: *Dark Summit*'s mission-based gameplay in action.



Looks spectacular, doesn't it?



The character design is uninspired.

DARK SUMMIT



INFO BURST

FORMAT	GAMECUBE
DEVELOPER	RADICAL
PUBLISHER	THQ
PLAYERS	1-2
MEM CARD PAGES	4
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO
COST	£40

A mountain of disappointment.



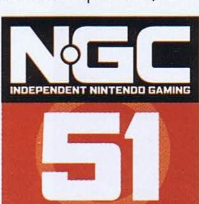
While the Gamecube-playing public will have been a tad perplexed at the last-minute postponement of EA's *SSX Tricky*, the producers of *Dark Summit* must have been rubbing their hands together in anticipation of a summer sales avalanche. Because despite *Dark Summit* being a hopelessly inferior *SSX*-alike, it pretty much had an unobstructed run down Gamecube's snowboarding slopes.

Dark Summit's one original idea is its mission-based gameplay – rather than the traditional set of championships and races, a 'spy' delivers new objectives such as 'smash ten snowmen', 'pull a huge stunt', or the ever-popular 'race down the hill as fast as you can'.

Okay, it's hardly going to spark a revolution, but the structure is there. *Dark Summit* has the bare bones of an great snowboarding game – Giles Goddard, the man behind the classic *1080°*, once told us that *Dark Summit*, set around a single huge mountain, is the kind of thing Nintendo really wanted their own snowboarding title to be.

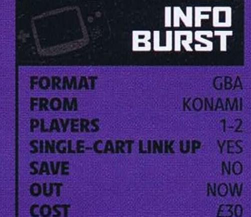
So why isn't it all that good? Simply because the designers didn't get much else right. There's no excitement in there; the mountain seems to be almost flat at times; the controls are unresponsive; most of the time you can see what you're supposed to do, but the fiddly trick system and leaden handling put paid to any chance you have of completing the task.

SSX Tricky isn't perfect, but it's bigger, better and stacks more fun than this. Maybe *Dark Summit* could be worth a rental for the evening, but only if you're prepared for the disappointment after.





ARCADE ADVANCED



INFO BURST

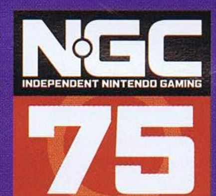
FORMAT	GBA
FROM	KONAMI
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	YES
SAVE	NO
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



With such a rich back-catalogue of arcade games at their disposal, it's a wonder Konami have taken so long to release a compilation like this. *Arcade Advanced* features six golden oldies, half of which (*Scramble*, *Frogger* and *Rush 'n' Attack*) could be considered landmark titles or true classics.

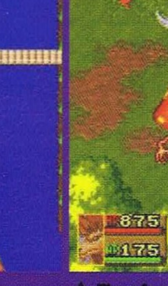
The others (*Yie Ar Kung Fu*, *Gyruss* and *Time Pilot*) don't stimulate the nostlagia glands quite so strongly. But each game is accurately converted and features a code-activated 'enhancement' – in *Frogger* and *Scramble* it's a souped-up graphics mode, while the others have something less dramatic, such as extra levels or additional gameplay options.

It's all enjoyable 80s action, but the lack of a save feature means you'll have to keep your high scores on a bit of paper. Now *that's* retro.





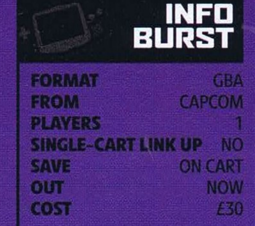
A fine party of RPG adventurers.





Time for a random battle. Not too bad, really.

BREATH OF FIRE II



INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	CAPCOM
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

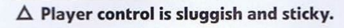


Since *Golden Sun* arrived on the scene, the first *Breath of Fire* (a SNES conversion) has paled into insignificance – seeming old and (at times) a bit dull. Thankfully *Breath of Fire II* goes some way to making the series attractive again – even though the gameplay is, for all intents and purposes, the same.

There are several improvements over the first instalment. Random battles still occur on a fairly regular and, erm, random basis, but are no longer quite as intrusive as they were before; the dialogue isn't quite so lengthy or frivolous; and the adventure has a better sense of direction – something that was sorely lacking in the original. On top of that, there's now an option to trade items via a link cable, while the magic/fusion system offers a lot more depth to your character attributes. All in all, it's pretty smart.







△ Player control is sluggish and sticky. △ Leave this one in the arcades, Sega.



△ A terrible disappointment for a game we were so looking forward to.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V2002




INFO BURST

FORMAT	GAMECUBE
DEVELOPER	SEGA
PUBLISHER	INFOGRAMES
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM CARD PAGES	12
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO
COST	£40

Comes home, goes away again.

We'll be honest: we were never the biggest fans of the arcade version of *Virtua Striker*, and this threequel home version does little to change our minds. Even with some very minor tweaks, this has little to recommend beyond some fairly spectacular volleys and free kicks and some chunky, intricately designed player models.

Those who argue that *Virtua Striker 3* doesn't have to offer the same kind of experience as *ISS* miss the point. You can forgive the game for not relying so heavily on deft flicks, beautifully timed through balls and one-touch football – this is, after all, an arcade game. What you can't forgive it for is the lack of precision passing, sluggish player reactions, awful player control and the occasional, unforgiveable AI glitches that leave entire teams frozen to the spot.

Arcade games are supposed to be *fun* – *Virtua Striker 3* isn't. It's slow, unrewarding and incredibly frustrating. Even in multiplayer games, the CPU seems to have too big a say, tackling and outpacing opponents for you. We saw a similar thing in last month's *ISS 2*, but at least that didn't decide when you were going to make a challenge – important decisions were left, as you'd expect, to you. Here, you feel like you've relinquished control of your team during vital moments of the match.

It's not all bad: in multiplayer this is strangely compelling, and the goals are are consistently outstanding. Otherwise, this is a letdown, especially when you consider it's come from the very talented Sega.

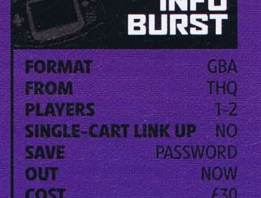


UK REVIEW

Other Gamecube and GBA treats available now



△ She'll be your handheld slave. △ Britney, baby – one more time.



INFO BURST

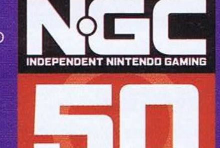
FORMAT	GBA
FROM	THQ
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	PASSWORD
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

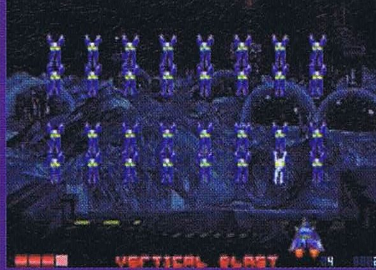
BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

Lovely Britney. Lovely, lovely Britney. She's pop's purest young minx, no matter what that rat Timberlake says, and now you can make her dance in the palm of your hand. And at £30, it's a fair bit cheaper than the equivalent service at Stringfellow's. Er, apparently.

The cart features five of Britney's chart-busting tunes, and you get to press the A and B buttons in time with the music to make her dance. Actually she seems to dance no matter which buttons you press, but the music isn't too bad once you get used to the piercing synth whine that replaces most of Britney's vocals.

To be honest, this is Britney memorabilia, not a proper videogame.



△ Pre-rendered sprites with decent animation. △ Loads of powerups to be had on this level.



INFO BURST

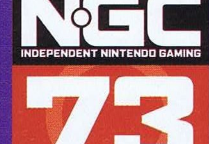
FORMAT	GBA
FROM	ACTIVISION
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

SPACE INVADERS

This nifty remake of the ancient arcade game is itself getting rather long in the tooth, having appeared on multiple consoles and computers over the past few years. But it's better suited to the GBA than to any of its previous platforms.

The basic gameplay of the original is expanded with the addition of colour-coded aliens. Shooting four of the same colour awards you a single powered-up shot which can be used to clear entire lines of enemies. It's a smart concept that adds a kind of simple puzzle element to the game.

The many types of alien drones you encounter over the course of the game's 100 levels makes it a good, varied blast. Ideal for GBA, really.



"Attacks are bolstered by the alarming array of weapons on offer"

ATTACK GAUGE
In order to unleash Groove Attacks, you'll need to have at least some of the gauge filled. You can increase it by attacking opponents with combos or by collecting gems.

HEALTH
You have a health and stock (lives) meter. Run out of health and your stock lowers. Run out of stock and you die. Simple as that.

RAVE DB
A Rave DB comes in three different colours, with each colour boasting a range of properties. Some turn you metallic, others give you the power of fire for example. They can be very powerful in the right combination.

WEAPONS
There's a healthy selection of these, ranging from light and fast to heavy and cumbersome – and everything in-between.



CRATES
Smash these open to reveal more weapons, health and stock pick-ups as well as Rave DBs.

PLAYERS
Up to four at one time. You'll all be battling it out for the best weapons and icons to unleash Groove Attacks. Unfortunately, players don't really differ that much from each other.



RAVE: THE GROOVE ADVENTURE

Into the groove? No, it's not another dance-like-a-dilbert beat-rhythm game – it's *Smash Bros Melee*'s first real challenger…

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	KONAMI
PUBLISHER	KONAMI
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	14
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
Out now in Japan, but US/UK versions have yet to be announced.

COST: £40





ow does a Konami take on *Power Stone* sound to you? Well, pretty good, to be honest. Capcom's multiplayer brawler has always been a firm favourite of ours, and *Rave: The Groove Adventure* borrows quite a few elements (and then some) from the Dreamcast classic.

If you're unsure about what to expect, this is essentially the whole story. You and up to four other players (Cube-controlled or otherwise) are thrown into a ring to do battle. Littering the arena are crates which, when smashed open, reveal a multitude of different weapons, health pick-ups and special icons (called Rave DBs) that alter your character's attack, defence and status abilities. Using a combination of these, you have to bludgeon your opponents into the ground until you're the only one left standing – doesn't sound like anything particularly special just yet, then.

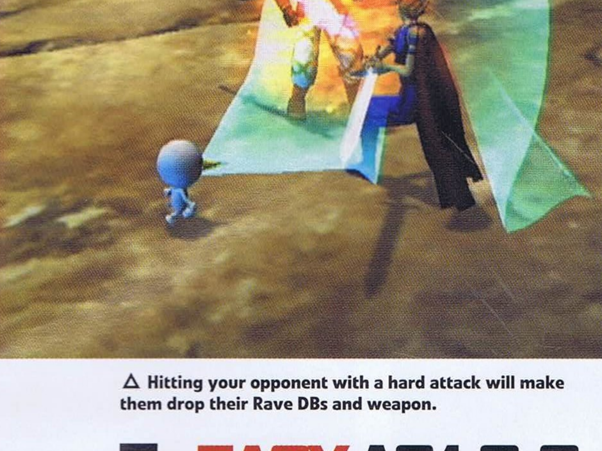
POWER TO THE PEOPLE

As in *Power Stone*, the emphasis is on collecting special items, which give you special attributes. However, this system is far more complex than in Capcom's fighter. Every character has three slots which can house one red, one blue and one yellow Rave DB, and each colour has a variety of different symbols indicating individual properties. Once you've filled each slot with each colour, you're able to unleash a Groove Attack, determined by the kind of weapon you're holding. Each Groove Attack uses up a portion of your special attack gauge, that can be topped up by collecting pick-ups or connecting combos on an enemy. If you're lucky enough to have collected the right combination of coloured Rave DBs *and* have a totally maxed-out attack gauge, you're able to dish out an Ultimate Groove Attack – which, as the name suggests, is pretty hardcore, delivering untold amounts of grief to whoever's on the receiving end.

> **"THE ULTIMATE GROOVE ATTACK IS PRETTY HARDCORE, DELIVERING UNTOLD AMOUNTS OF GRIEF"**

RAVE: THE GROOVE ADVENTURE

Stand back – it's 3D smackage, manga-style

△ Hitting your opponent with a hard attack will make them drop their Rave DBs and weapon.



△ There are loads of these conversational anime stills between each bout. Oh to be fluent in Kanji.



△ The final Rave DB we need to unleash an ultimate groove attack – let's hope we have the right combination.



EASY AS 1, 2, 3... (AND 4)

Your instant guide to an quick victory.



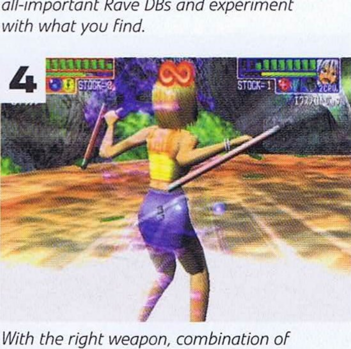
1 Step one – just charge in and hammer away at your foe to increase your attack meter as quickly as possible.




2 Next up, start smashing crates to find those all-important Rave DBs and experiment with what you find.



3 If your opponent manages to get hold of a Rave DB, beat him down with a fierce attack and steal it from him.


4 With the right weapon, combination of Rave DBs and a maxed-out attack gauge, activate your Ultimate Groove Attack.

△ Character models are pretty basic, especially when compared to *Super Smash Bros Melee*. Still, they move fast enough and have plenty of animations.

Naturally, anyone involved in the skirmish will be trying to get hold of these icons themselves, and so much of the action revolves around smashing crates to find them, while stopping anyone else getting their grubby paws on them. To help you out, you have two forms of basic attack. First off is the weak attack, which can be strung into a combo and is the best way to increase your attack gauge. Second is the slower heavy attack, which connects only once and knocks your opponent backwards, forcing them to drop any pick-ups they've collected.

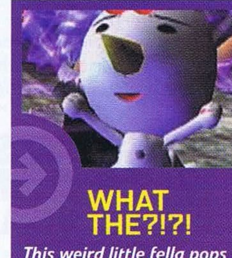
Attacks are bolstered by the alarming array of weapons on offer. While your character will start off with their default or Groove weapon, there's a wide variety to choose from, ranging from whips and hammers to swords and daggers, all of which can be swapped by tapping Z. Every weapon allows you to pull off a different Groove Attack, and so finding the right tool for the job is all part of the experience. Fighting essentially breaks down to four components: power-up chasing and thieving; attack-gauge building; weapon swapping; and special-attack unleashing. It's quite entertaining – until you realise just how limited it all is.

ALL TOO EASY

Granted, there are plenty of weapons to try out and enough combinations of groove icons to experiment with (usually to little success), but ultimately you're just repeating the same routine over and over. Smash crate, pick up icon, unleash combo, build attack gauge, unleash attack, and repeat. There's really no need to alter your tactics, no matter who you're up against. The range of attacks on offer (no matter what weapon you're holding) is a major let-down, with only a set combo, heavy attacks and a single special move available. The Ultimate Groove Attack, despite being nice to look at, soon gets tedious and there's little incentive to charge it up – it isn't *that* devastating.

To make matters worse, the single-player Story mode isn't much cop. Mainly because the AI on any opponent is laughable, falling for the same cheap attacks over and over again. Even on the most difficult setting, you never really feel threatened – because foes seem unable to react at anything other than a snail's pace, you can run rings around them. What you're left with is a collection of great ideas that are never fully realised, and so is only fun to play with three human opponents to fight against. A real shame.

GERAINT EVANS



WHAT THE?!?!

This weird little fella pops up all over the shop. We have no idea what his true purpose is, but we do know, after much experimentation, that you can smack him about the arena if he gets in your way. Best of all, though, if you hit him hard enough you can send him flying into your opponent's face whenever the mood takes you. Bonus.



- Some smart ideas.
- Frantic and accessible.
- Brilliant with four human players.



- Pathetic AI.
- Not enough depth.
- Single-player game is severely limited.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Super Smash Bros Melee
Nintendo
NGC/68 95%
The Cube's best fighting game. Easy.



7 VISUALS

Clean and crisp anime styling with decent models and arenas.



6 SOUNDS

Pretty forgettable: oddball tunes, slashing, screaming and speech.



6 MASTERY

Not horrendous, but the lack of detail is hardly pushing your Cube.

7 LIFESPAN

Good fun with four players – rubbish on your own, though.

VERDICT

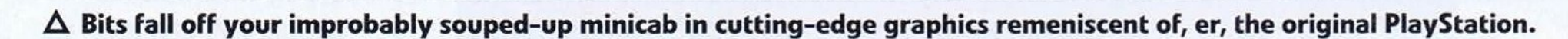
Good fun at first, but a shallow fighting system lets the side down. If you like its manga namesake, you'll enjoy it.



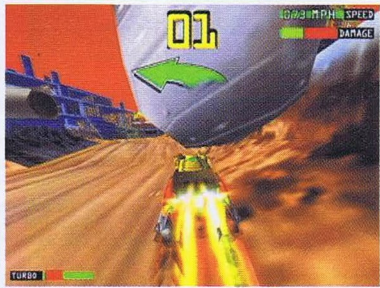


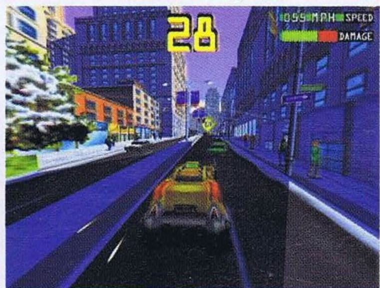
"It really is as mind-numbingly idiotic and incompetent as it looks"




△ Bits fall off your improbably souped-up minicab in cutting-edge graphics remeniscent of, er, the original PlayStation.







△ Just look at the 'detail' on that 'tree'.

SMASHING DRIVE

Less 'Smashing', more 'Sunday'... We take Namco's tedious racing game for a spin.



△ Pedestrians are, sadly, impossible to kill. Even with this.

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	NAMCO
PUBLISHER	NAMCO
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	1
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT? Out now in the US and Japan – no confirmed release date here, though.



COST: £40

This can hardly come as a surprise. If any of you have been reading **NGC** for the past few months you'll have seen the (cough) screenshots of this forthcoming racer, and probably wept with despair. Well, guess what folks? It really is as mind-numbingly idiotic and incompetent as it looks. Namco – the people behind *Tekken* and *Soul Calibur*, remember – should bury their heads in shame.

The arcade version was a disgrace, with the only 'redeeming' feature being the fact that you could sit inside a can and get jolted about as you crashed into stuff. Not a bad experience for 50p (if you don't mind dislocating your spine and losing a further five quid down the sides of the machine), but if the same experience became available in a home version, would you fork out £40? Would you, jiminy.

Here's the inspired premise: you drive a Fifth Element-style taxi (not that it makes a blind bit of difference what you drive) and have to out-race your rival to the finish. Dotted along your predetermined route are lame power-ups, ramps and cheeky time-saving shortcuts. In order to be successful you'll need to use as many of these as is humanly possible... if you can be bothered.

You see, the trouble with *Smashing Drive* is that it plays like no-one gave a damn about it during development. The detail bestowed on every object – buildings, cars or pedestrians – is appalling, and the super-slow speed at which it all moves considering the lack of visual flair is unforgiveable.

> "THE SLOW SPEED AT WHICH IT ALL MOVES, CONSIDERING THE LACK OF VISUAL FLAIR, IS UNFORGIVEABLE"

Furthermore, the taxi's controls are about as subtle as a sledgehammer. The analogue steers you from left to right, while the B-button allows you to powerslide around tight corners – but even this is implemented horrendously, resulting in constant crashing as you attempt to round the easiest corners.

Here's hoping it doesn't appear here.

GERAINT EVANS

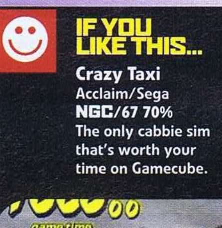
+

- Okay for about five minutes. Well, three.
- The horn power-up is mildly amusing.

–

- Slow and ugly.
- Basic controls.
- No subtlety. At all.
- Costs 40 quid.





IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Crazy Taxi
Acclaim/Sega
NGC/67 70%
The only cabbie sim that's worth your time on Gamecube.



3 VISUALS
Ugly in the arcade and ugly on Gamecube. This really is awful.

5 SOUNDS
Not as repulsive as the rest of the game, but nothing to crow about.

2 MASTERY
What were Namco thinking? Or, rather, what were they *doing*?

3 LIFESPAN
If you and a masochistic mate enjoy the two-player, call it a week.

VERDICT
The mutant offspring of *Crazy Taxi* and *Carmageddon*. Under no circumstances should you even consider touching it.

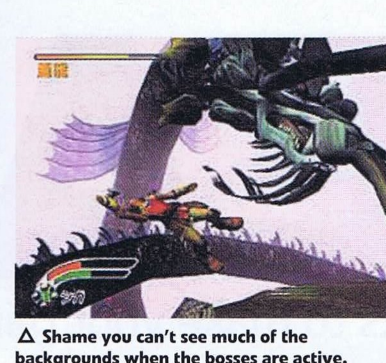






"A non-stop tornado of cartoon violence"

Ten-hit combos are just for starters. Wade into a big group of enemies and you can rack up over 100.



Shame you can't see much of the backgrounds when the bosses are active.





It's a silky 60fps throughout the game.



A 23-hit combo comes to a fiery end.



The boss here is so big, he has his own weather system.



See the fog? It's a real pea-souper out there.

BATTLE HOUSHIN

Get ready for some manic feudal fun! This is the busiest hack-'em-up on Gamecube…

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	KOEI
PUBLISHER	KOEI
PLAYERS	1
MEMORY CARD PAGES	1
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	YES
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT? There's a US and possible UK release as *Mystic Heroes* later this year.

COST: £40



Although it's a spin-off from *Houshin Engi*, a manga inspired by a 500-year-old book of Chinese legends, *Battle Houshin* isn't the RPG you might expect from such source material.

It's actually very much like *Gauntlet*, featuring a party of adventurers hacking their way through a ridiculous amount of enemies. The characters and locations are taken from the manga, and it's strictly one-player only – the Gamecube takes care of the rest of your team and its support army of expendable grunts.

SUPER MANGA BLAST

From start to finish, *Battle Houshin* is a non-stop tornado of cartoon violence. There's little strategy involved, other than knowing when to break off to find a health power-up, but it still manages to look at least a *tiny* bit like there are really two warring armies rather than a load of fodder for your sword.

The fighting is set up to be satisfying rather than challenging, although the number of enemies makes it a fairly difficult game. You have a basic weapon to hit things, and the more you hit, the more your magic meter increases, enabling powerful spells. As long as you stay in the thick of the action you'll never run out of magic.

You can launch massive combos of over 100 hits by wiping out entire platoons in one go. Juggling dead bodies also counts as a combo, and, hilariously, the CPU soldiers will often join in for a spot of corpse keepy-up.

Everything moves very smoothly too, and the special effects aren't too shabby either, but the graphics are let down by the terribly short draw distance. Seeing a massive boss fade in and out of view as you move around it spoils the atmosphere somewhat. *Battle Houshin* is still lots of fun though, and your mates will have a much better time watching you play than they would teaming up for a rubbish game of *Gauntlet Dark Legacy*.



Another magical attack. Very pretty.

MARTIN KITTS



- Huge battles with countless enemies.
- Good magic effects.
- Instant gratification.



- Plenty of lovely fogging everywhere.
- Repetitive action.
- No multiplayer mode.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Super Smash Bros
Nintendo
NGC/68 95%
Hectic fighting with bloodthirsty Ninty characters.





6 VISUALS

Very smooth, even with loads of enemies, but very foggy too.



6 SOUNDS

Noisy battles with plenty of voice samples and meaty spot effects.



6 MASTERY

Scores points for its GBA link-up with Jap-only RPG *Magical Houshin.*

6 LIFESPAN

It's not huge, but it's worth replaying with different characters.

VERDICT

Manga fans will enjoy it more than most – everyone else should appreciate it as the game that *Gauntlet* should have been.







GEAR

Enhancements to make your gaming experience more 'pleasurable' – see 'em rated!



MOBILE POWER GC

FROM INTERACT | **£39.99**

We can imagine it now. "Ooh, Granny what have you bought me?" (Feverishly unwraps present.) "Hooray! It's a... a... mobile Gamecube screen... with... *over 1.5 hours worth* of power?" Pfffffff. Surely a 40-quid plastic slab that'll smash a rhino skull through sheer weight alone should be offering more than a measly hour-and-a-half of play time? You'll barely be off the second level of *Rogue Leader* by the time this slips off to bed for a snooze. The *idea* of mobile screens is great – but they're going to have to offer more time to *really* convince us of their worth.

NGC VERDICT 30

ASSORTED THIRD-PARTY CABLES

FROM VARIOUS | **£10-ISH**

S-Video cables first: put simply, *they do not work with PAL Gamecubes*. If you see one in the shops and decide it might make *Rogue Leader* look a bit better, forget it – all you'll get is a blank screen. Obviously Nintendo forgot to mention that small fact to third parties. But what about RGB and RF cables? Well, they could prove equally problematic: the Scart lead from Logic 3 simply didn't provide a good enough picture compared to the official Nintendo version, while the RF lead from Interact worked well enough but, unfortunately, due to the constraints of RF, was even less satisfactory than Logic 3's Scart. Our advice? For the best results (and a whole lot less bother), shell out a few more quid for official cables.

NGC VERDICT 52



4 GAMERS RACING WHEEL

FROM BIG BEN INTERACTIVE | **£24.99**

While last month's Challenge 2 Racing wheel hardly filled us with joy, it was at least *fairly* decent. This monstrosity, on the other hand, isn't. First of all, the button placement is just plain rubbish, and unless you're the mutant son of Dahlsim, some of the buttons are ridiculously awkward to access – making games like *XG3* a nightmare to play. Secondly, the wheel just isn't that well-built, making the responsiveness at various points in its turning circle feel twitchy and inaccurate. At the end of the day, a good racing peripheral should make driving games more fun to play - this doesn't. Ignore it.

NGC VERDICT 45



CUBESTAND PLUS

FROM INTERACT | **£12.99**

Can somebody tell us what in the name of Jimmy Smits this is for? Why would you need it? What possible use could it be other than to offer a couple of seconds' worth of entertainment as you spin the stand around? Made from black plastic, with a rotating black cube that has two drawers and a sort of jukebox-style disc holder, this is about as steady as Dan after a can of Top Deck, while the drawer holds all your discs too close together so they get scratched really easily. But, then, you shouldn't need much convincing – peripherals are supposed to be useful additions to your gaming collection, something that's going to aid you or make your life easier. This is the exact opposite, a spinning nightmare that ends up tangling your pad leads and making your life a misery.

NGC VERDICT 31



QUBE PAD

FROM WILD THINGS | **£14.99**

Nice. Another decent pad courtesy of Wild Things. In fact, this is the first pad we've seen that even comes close to Logic 3's effort. Firstly, it's comfortable – almost as comfortable as the official pad, in fact. The buttons are nicely placed and intuitive, while the shoulder triggers offer good resistance and the digital clicks on them are nice and distinctive. Despite still having a little of that third-party 'cheap' feel, it holds up very well – the only gripe we have is that the D-pad is a bit sloppy and the main analogue stick is perhaps just a little too tall and slack-feeling. All in all, not too shabby.

NGC VERDICT 80



QUBE CARRY CASE

FROM WILD THINGS | **£14.99**

Hmmm – not bad. It's nicely padded, the stitching is sound and it's certainly well made. Your Gamecube fits snuggly in the main compartment, while there's loads of room on the side panels to keep joypads and game boxes without having to stuff them in. There's also loads of extra secure padding for anyone who's overly paranoid about damaging their purple baby. So as a carry case, it does the job well at a decent enough price, but we'd advise caution if you're going to use it in school or work – it's not great for books or files, and although you might *just* be able to squeeze a laptop in, you're most likely to get your face kicked in.

NGC VERDICT 70



GAMES WALLET

FROM WILD THINGS | **£4.99**

At last: something that's actually pretty useful. No doubt you've seen one of these before – it's just a zippable case with 12 plastic wallets to keep your discs in - but considering the fact that GC game boxes are a little over the top compared to the size of the discs themselves, this is well worth investing in. It comes in a choice of four colours (Purple, Black, Silver and Orange) and is designed to look like the top of a Gamecube. What more do you need to know?

NGC VERDICT 81

GAME BOY ADVANCE TRAVEL PACK

FROM BLAZE | **£19.99**

We're getting pretty sick of these, to be honest. The trouble with these all-in-one jobs is that while the price may be decent, the content is pretty poor. Okay, so you can't really go wrong with guff like AC adaptors, car adaptors and link cables, but when it comes to lights and battery packs, you're unlikely to find the best tucked away in an all-in-one pack. Not that this is all that bad, mind. There's plenty in here for your money, but we reckon you'll probably be hunting for a new magnifier and light about a week after buying this. Not a bad present for someone, but we wouldn't rush out and buy one for yourself.

NGC VERDICT 68




FREE!
Mountain Biking UK
SCOTT USA
MASSIVE POSTER
DOWNHILL • CROSS COUNTRY • TRIALS • FREERIDE
BRITAIN'S BEST SELLING BIKE MAGAZINE
Mountain Biking UK
NEW RIDERS START HERE
£3.30 JUNE 2002
NEW SKOOL
Britain's burly young riders show off their moves
CROSS COUNTRY
X-stream river ride
SHORE THING
MBUK/Kona freeride comp kicks off!
HOW TO...
BLEED DISC BRAKES
RIDE TRIALS IN YOUR HOUSE
TRAIN TO WIN DOWNHILL
RIDE LADDER DROPS
RIDE THE WORLD CUP
Fort William corner by corner
INTERVIEW PEATY
With nowt taken out
57 PRODUCTS REVIEWED
BIKE TEST: CUBE VS ORBEA VS FELT
2003 Kona, RockShox NEW Crank Bros pedals
GROUP TEST ALL THE LATEST DISC BRAKES
On-One Geared Inbred Norco VPS-Drop
ROUTE GUIDE SCENIC TRAILS IN WEST YORKSHIRE
JUNE ISSUE ON SALE NOW!







WE CHAT TO GORILLAZ

World first! Number-one band Gorillaz tell us why they're the biggest Cube fans around! P114

TIPS FOR...



SONIC ADVENTURE 2

Brilliant guide to Sonic's Nintendo debut – see it all with **NGC**! Plus, a secrets-packed *Sonic* GBA guide. P92

GAMING PLANET

This month: *Animal Leader*. Travel the world, eat animals, defecate freely. Sound good? P120

I'M THE BEST

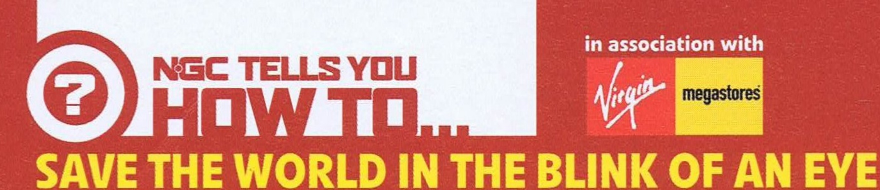
Play to win! Get your best times in to us to stand a chance of winning some tasty prizes! P102

NEW!
NGC'S NEW DIRECTORY

With so many games out there, you're going to need to know what's worth buying… P112

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SAVE THE WORLD IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

SONIC ADVENTURE 2



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Speed. At least, that's the immediate impression. But as *Sonic* fans already know, there's more to it than that. Sure, you can blaze through each level in a tearing hurry, but that won't help you when you're hunting for shards of the Master Emerald. In this game, exploration is as important as your velocity, as you'll find out here in our character-specific exposés.



WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 67

"As we're all painfully aware of Sega's true potential, Sonic Team America's latest outing just doesn't cut it. There's plenty for Sonic aficionados to enjoy, but most Nintendo fans are looking for bigger and better things."



1


See how fast you can take in these hints and tips.

2


PLAY IT WHERE IT LAYS

Six characters and two allegiances are available in the Story Mode: Sonic, Tails and Knuckles on the Hero side; Shadow, Dr Robotnik and Rouge on the Dark side. When it kicks off, you get the option of pursuing either side, but the levels are automated – you'll hop backwards and forwards between your chosen three throughout the game, with each character having their own distinct type of level. However, the characters are matched on each side, so Sonic and Shadow get speedy levels, Tails and Dr Robotnik play time-limited shooting and racing levels, and Knuckles and Rouge hunt for three parts of different artefacts. We've grouped the protagonists to show you what to expect for each type.

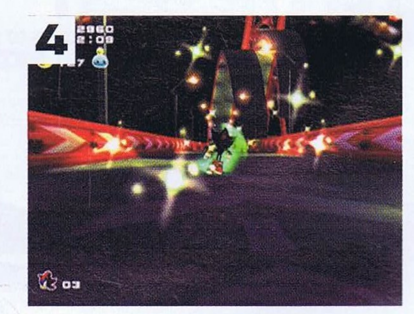


NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE!

KARTED OFF

The two-player karting option opens up early into the Story mode, and it's... okay. Not Mario Kart, granted – but not bad.

3


4


RULES OF THE ROAD HOG

The top ten things you must always remember – or pay a heavy price. Bwah-ha-hah.



RULE 1: SPEED
If you're playing as Sonic or his alter-ego Shadow, keeping your speed up will often see you clear obstacles without noticing they're there. There are times when you need to go slow , but most levels are designed for mad dashing.



RULE 2: RINGS
You know the score: the more you're carrying, the safer you are. Grab 100 for a 1-Up and earn an extra Emblem by securing every ring in each level. All that glitters is indeed gold, but a single hit from an enemy will rob you of the lot.



RULE 3: ATTACKING
Sonic's trademark Dash Attack has been upgraded for the 3D series with a self-guiding feature that will home in on the nearest enemy. The beauty is that you can destroy multiple enemies without having to re-aim each time.



RULE 4: CRITTERS
Robotnik's evil plans always involve some kind of techie modification to small, furry creatures. If the RSPCA got wind of it, they'd probably lynch him. Save the little critters by Dash Attacking, then capturing them.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2

Master every inch of Sonic's first outing on the Cube

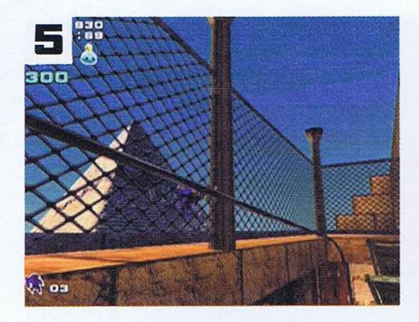
STAY ALERT

Other stuff of interest includes the fighter jets that seem intent on bombing both Sonic and Shadow on their respective levels. They're fast, so keep moving. If you're eagle-eyed enough, you'll spot the numerous references to previous Sonic Team games, as well as adverts for branded merchandise

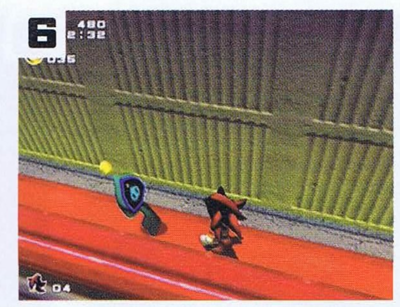








5



6



7

SONIC AND HIS SHADOW

Being the alter-ego of Sonic, Shadow bears all the same skills, particularly the speed, so both 'hog levels are similar affairs – namely, fast and furious. Check out what sort of features to expect:

Naturally, you'll want to go as quickly as you can for much of the level, especially when you're under threat from the likes of the runaway lorry in City Escape **(1)** or when trying to catch the rocket before it launches in Metal Harbour **(2)**. Sometimes it's just a case of escaping the level the time limit expires, à la Green Forest **(3)**. Keep your thumb wedged forward and you'll stay at supersonic velocities – that's even if you're heading out of the screen. Up on the analogue stick is always forward, *Resident-Evil*-style. Rings are often in long strips, so you'll be able to pick up quite a few – the Magnetic Shield is well useful in this situation, attracting the rings toward you as you fly by **(4)**.

When you slow down a little, keep your mince pies peeled for structures to ride, such as rails and overhead pipes. You can grind these (press B to crouch) and swing on the pipes **(5)**, pressing A to release yourself, before flying up to previously-unreachable heights. You can also whizz around on vines, too .

Besides rings, shields and so on, each level is replete with animals to save and phials to grab, both of which feature heavily in Chao breeding. You may see small pipes protruding from the ground: if you whistle while stood next to them, trapped animals appear – often ones that are unavailable elsewhere. Other rare creatures can be found buried in the dark corners of the level, particularly in precarious places. If you can grab them, do so, as they'll increase your breeding potential. Additionally, be on the lookout for the three blue boxes that yield Chao Tokens for introducing new form of collectible critters to the Chao Garden **(6)**.

> **NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE!**
>
> **CAMEO CAT**
>
> *Sonic Adventure's Big the Cat was in SA2 on Dreamcast, but despite what you may have read, he's not in the Cube port.*

Counteracting all the speedy sections for the 'hogs is a variety of seemingly impassible gaps in the landscape – typically over quicksand or water. Fortunately, they won't appear until you have the requisite upgrades to deal with them.

If you see a line of floating enemies, you'll need to use your Homing Attack to jump from one to the next, therefore spanning the gap **(7)**. The other obstacle is a line of floating rings that require you to be in possession of the Light Dash upgrade – simply stand by the first ring and press B: you'll follow the line of rings across the gap, landing at the other side.

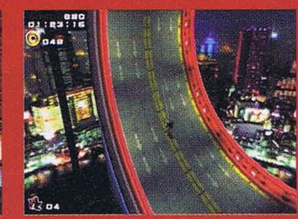
The other way to travel is by the rockets that appear in many levels. Simply touch any rocket to be blasted up to dizzier heights. Note that it's worth seeking out hidden rockets as they'll go to undiscovered parts of the level.



RULE 5: PHIALS
If you're breeding Chao, those coloured phials that are expelled from vanquished foes are worth collecting. They help nurture your Chao into the type that you're after. Just blag as many as you can.



RULE 6: UPGRADES
Story mode levels present new challenges to each character, which they'd be unable to surmount without the relevant aid. You'll get power-ups and new manoeuvres, such as Sonic's Light Dash or Rouge's Drill.



RULE 7: LOOPS
Maybe you hate Sonic. Maybe you were born in 1992. You may even own a (cough) PlayStation. None of this excuses you, though, if you don't know the significance of the loops in a *Sonic* game. Er, they're to gather up speed.



RULE 8: LAMPPOSTS
A save point by any other name. Lose a life by foolishly plummeting into the drink, and this is where you'll emerge – provided you have the requisite lives in stock. Why lampposts? Beats the hell out of us.



RULE 9: OMACHAO
Any area that requires a little explanation, Omachao's the creature you want. Walk up to him and he'll offer titbits of info, should anything not be obvious. Careful, though – he can be picked up and thrown and he does not like it.



RULE 10 EMBLEMS
Each successive goal you achieve, like completing a level within a set time, awards you an Emblem and these, in turn, unlock more two-player modes, extra skins and the retro-tastic return to the Greenhill Zone.







THE FOX AND THE EGG MAN

As odd as it is to play as Dr Robotnik in a *Sonic* game, both he and Miles 'Tails' Prower spend most of their time in walker robots, mechs, gears, or whatever you want to call them. Thematically, there will often be hazards such as quicksand or vast drops to avoid – slipping over the edge spells loss of life, so tread carefully **(8)**. The walkers are certainly nimble, but they're also equipped with thruster jets that will help you glide from point to point as well as remaining airborne for longer.

The majority of the time, you'll be besieged by robots and floating gun pods. Taking them out is almost too easy, as all you need do is hold down B and wave your red targeting beam over them before releasing the button, destroying multiple targets **(9)**. It's worth continually targeting for enemies, as even ostensibly out-of-range ones can be destroyed. Not only that, but you'll need to waste enemies behind bars and walls to proceed through the next doors: they won't open until all foes are vanquished **(10)**. There are also hidden lives and power-ups off screen, so keep searching, even if you think nothing's there **(11)**.

There's little more to do on these levels, as they're generally just a case of killing everything in sight and making a dash for the finish line. Occasionally you might need to form a bridge by knocking over tall towers, but it doesn't get any more challenging than that **(12)**. Each checkpoint is timed and stopping to investigate for secret areas often yields nothing and just chews up your time. It's fun, if a bit banal.

VROOM GLOOM

Tails gets a bit of a reprieve with his racing levels, but it doesn't last long. Keep your speed up and there's precious little to stop you from completing your objective, save the odd car and tight corner. Drive through the pit on each lap to snag a balloon that gives you boost power. Exciting stuff. Between them, there's not much to inspire the soul in the Tails and Robotnik's levels.





NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE!

We managed to sneak into the pyramid and find Eggman's secret base!

NO NO NO!!!

Dialogue? Direlogue, more like. It's an atrocity to the ears. You can flick the game to its native Kanji and add subtitles.





SONIC ADVENTURE 2

Master every inch of Sonic's first outing on the Cube

KNUCKLES SANDWICH

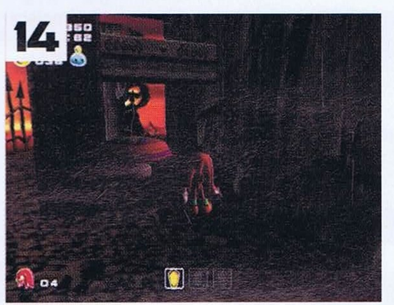
In terms of hazards, there are none too many, as you spend a lot of time hunting – 15 to 20 minutes or longer. There are a few things you should watch out for, such as weights that try to crush you flat. Run under them too slowly and you're roadkill.

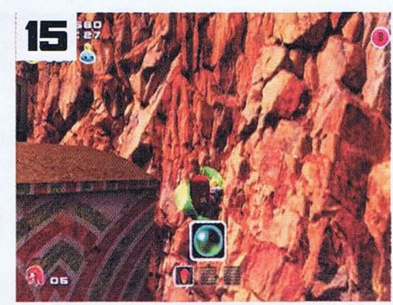




SONIC ADVANCE

Get the tips you need for Sonic's GBA outing – remember, this Cube version and the Advance game connect up! Neat!







RED KNUCKLES, ROGUE BATS

Knuckles and Rouge share exactly the same task for their levels – finding either three shards of the Master Emerald or three different items, such as keys. Their zones are expansive, multi-levelled affairs, often populated with hidden sections. However, all you need do is watch the radar at the bottom of the screen, as it flashes brighter and quicker when you approach one of the hidden artefacts **(13)**. Sometimes, they're not particularly well hidden, but you'll need to follow the radar in the first place to get a rough idea of their locations .

Both Knuckles and Rouge can dig down into most substances (rock, earth and the like) – doing so often reveals shields and rings, so it's worth a little excavation now and again **(14)**. Smashing boxes also leads the way to hidden extra lives or bumpers to higher parts of the level **(15)**.

Finding the pieces of the Master Emerald is always hard, as the game randomises their locations each time you enter the level. Not only that, but you'll need to move a few things around to open up different areas. Examples are the ghost train turntable on Pumpkin Hill and the water on Aquatic Mine. The latter requires you to flood or drain the chamber to three different levels in order to explore the whole area **(16)**. It's no small task, but there are lots of floating monitors that will give you clues.

Be on the lookout for other aids, such as the balloons on Pumpkin Hill: they'll give you extra rings and raise your altitude a little – helpful when you're traversing those massive gaps between the mountains **(17)**. Also, check out the oddly-named Dry Lagoon level. There's a huge pool where you need to free a giant turtle from two robot guards, before riding it to the next oasis **(18)**. Following that, you have to dive down into the water and hitch a lift with another amphibian in order to find a hidden passage. Be prepared to surface pretty rapidly as soon as the oxygen countdown begins, though.

Overall, finding success in the Knuckles and Rouge levels is a case of constantly exploring and experimenting, as you'll soon find out after repeated attempts. Try to keep your bearings, as it's easy to get lost in such vast arenas – and dig everywhere you can, as you never know what you might unearth when you try.

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE!

BACK IN TIME

Nab all 180 Emblems and you'll be treated to the opening Greenhill Zone level from the original Mega Drive Sonic.



NGC TELLS YOU HOW TO...

in association with Virgin megastores

STOCK UP ON EMERALDS IN SONIC ADVANCE



Track down the most elusive Chaos Emeralds with our guide.

It's the questions that bug every player of *Sonic Advance*, the top platformer for the Game Boy Advance: Where for the love of Mike are those last few Chaos Emeralds? Er, and who's Mike?

No doubt you've located most of the seven secret springs you need to launch yourself into the bonus game where the Chaos Emeralds wait, but there's sure to be one or two that prove elusive.

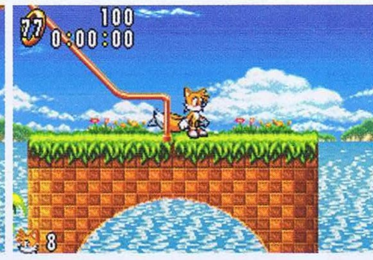
So here's how to find them all. Simply follow the directions and look out for the landmarks shown in the screenshots – the sheer size of each level makes mapping virtually impossible, but if you've got a fair general idea of the layout you should be able to find your way between the places shown in the screenshots.

Remember you have to get enough rings in the bonus game and complete the level in order to keep the gem. Your reward... Well, we don't want to spoil the surprise. Suffice to say it's well worth the effort. And if you spot Mike, let us know.

NEO GREEN HILL ACT 2 — Red Chaos Emerald



1 Above the save point is an outcrop with a trampoline. Bounce to the next platform; the spring is below you and to the right.



2 Jump down to the loop top below. You're now level with the spring, so jump and helicopter to a platform to the right.



3 Leap up to a higher level and across to the flagpole. Grab hold of it to flip yourself up onto the curved section of wall...



4 And there's the spring. You can reach it if you just run along the level as normal, but it helps to have a reference point.

SECRET BASE ACT 2 — Blue Chaos Emerald



1 Use this exploding manhole cover to boost up to a moving platform above you, and proceed to a loop with a 1-Up icon.



2 Fly along here. It's the standard route through the level, and you're already almost at the spring.



3 Look for these yellow and black platforms by the side of a loop. They're what you need to fling you up to the top.



4 A couple of good springs later and you'll be on to of the loop, which is where you'll find the secret spring.

CASINO PARADISE ACT 1 — Yellow Chaos Emerald



1 Float over the bumpers and onto this platform. Continue right and float to a flagpole which will flip you up.



2 Across the plateau and over the S-O-N-I-C letters. Jump on them when they turn yellow, or simply helicopter over the top.



3 Carry on flying over those bumpers and balloons until you come to a large area with pinball flippers.



4 If you've taken the same route we did, the spring will be next to the second flipper you encounter.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

***Sonic Advance* marks the hedgehog's return to his 2D roots. Cheek-flapping speed, all-new levels and a wide range of extra playable characters make this GBA outing the *Sonic* of choice for purists.**

WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 65

"If you've ever played Sonic's adventures to death on the Mega Drive, then you're going to be in your element here... everything is in place... [it's] proof that the spiny blue rodent is better off sticking to his 2D roots."

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **80**

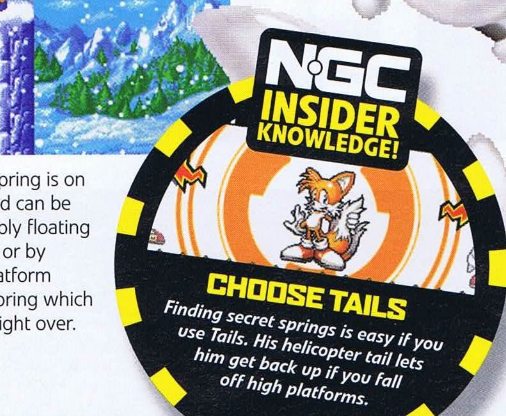
SONIC ADVANCE

Discover the last of the Chaos Emeralds

ICE MOUNTAIN ACT 1 — Green Chaos Emerald







1 The spring is located fairly close to the start, and isn't hard to find. In fact you'll probably stumble over it by flying around with Tails. But if you haven't managed to bump into it yet, here's how. Get to the first checkpoint and carry on through the tunnel. Jump up to the higher level.

2 Carry on over here and jump off the right edge. The next landmark to look for is a spinning triple platform. You can jump on it and then hop off from the top, or just use Tails to float over until you spot the outcrop in the next picture. Sega must have got bored hiding the springs…

3 The secret spring is on this outcrop, and can be reached by simply floating over to the left, or by looking for a platform with a yellow spring which will boost you right over.

ICE MOUNTAIN ACT 2 — Silver Chaos Emerald









1 Use this rock to jump up onto a higher platform. Continue past the pulley and drop, missing the angled spring below.

2 Jump onto this small platform and use the spring to propel you up and right, to the next level. Continue past the rollers.

3 Hit the diagonal spring and float down to the right, where you'll see a triple spinning platform.

4 The secret spring is just past the spinning platform, on the right. Help yourself, why don't you?

ANGEL ISLAND ACT 2 — Cyan Chaos Emerald







1 The first landmark is the first set of spikes you encounter. Carry on until you see a spring, which boosts you left down a slide.

2 After the second curved wall following the S-bend, head up and bounce on this yellow spring to land on a roller platform.

3 After the rollers, go past the red spring onto the moving platforms. A yellow spring bounces you onto a rolling platform.

4 Go over more of these rollers, until you see a giant bee hovering over the final one. Jump to the right for the secret spring.

COSMIC ANGEL ACT 2 — Purple Chaos Emerald







1 Up and over the wall, via this yellow spring. As long as you stay on the upper paths you'll arrive at the secret spring.

2 When you spot this checkpoint, you'll know you're on the right path. If you fall down, helicopter your way back on track.

3 Onwards in the general direction of the end of the level, using the diagonal springs to boost yourself up to this ledge.

4 Float over to the right and you'll see the secret spring. Get the last Chaos Emerald, finish the level, and you're done.



THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING…

TIPS EXTRA

NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

On the title screen of each of the levels on Wave Race: Blue Storm, you can move the little water droplet around with the analogue stick.

Stuart Hazelman, via email



SONIC ADVENTURE BATTLE

LIGHT SHOES

To pick up these zippy sneakers, enter the Metal Harbour level, use your homing attack on the Gunbots to pass over the large open gap, then get on the crane lift. There should then be a platform behind you with the shoes nestling nicely on it.

MAGIC GLOVES

On City Escape, run down the building, head up the stairs and bounce-attack the metal gun-boxes you find lying on the floor. After a short while, you'll fall through to Magic Glove heaven.

ANCIENT LIGHT

Take a casual stroll through Green Forest until you reach the second checkpoint. Done it? Good. Now see that ring capsule near you? And that enemy coming into view? Do a homing attack on both, then skip right and you should see a lives capsule on a platform. The Ancient Light is next to that.

BOUNCE BRACELET

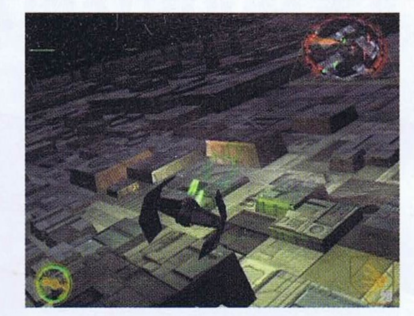
Have fun zooming round the first loop you come to, then hit the speed ramp. This will take you across to meet one of those nasty E-1000 bots, at which point you should climb up the nearby ledge to snap up that snazzy diamante Bounce Bracelet.

BLOODY ROAR PRIMAL FURY

DIFFERENT BOSSES

Fighting as the following characters will change the end Boss:

- Fight as Jenny, get Gado as the Boss.
- Fight as Stun, get Uranus as the Boss.
- Fight as Cronos, get Uranus as the Boss.
- Fight as Busuzima, get Stun as the Boss.
- Fight as Bakuryu, get Yugo as the Boss.
- Fight as Alice, get Long as the Boss.
- Fight as Kohryu, get Uranus as the Boss.



ROGUE LEADER

RACE CHEAT

On the Beggar's Canyon race, it's possible to take a sneaky shortcut by following Biggs down path one until it says 'Path One' on the screen. At that point, pull off a sharp U-turn and head off down path two.

SUICIDE

On Razor Rendezvous, if you go all kamikaze into the command deck after the shield generators have been destroyed, you will end the mission but not lose one of your precious lives. Handy.

BUICK

Fancy seeing an old Buick floating around in the Nebula? At the very beginning of the Ison Corridor level, make a quick 180 degree turn, but make sure you don't speed up or slow down as you do it. If you now centre your ship on the medical frigate, you'll see that retro-tastic car flying towards you from down below.

EXTREME G3

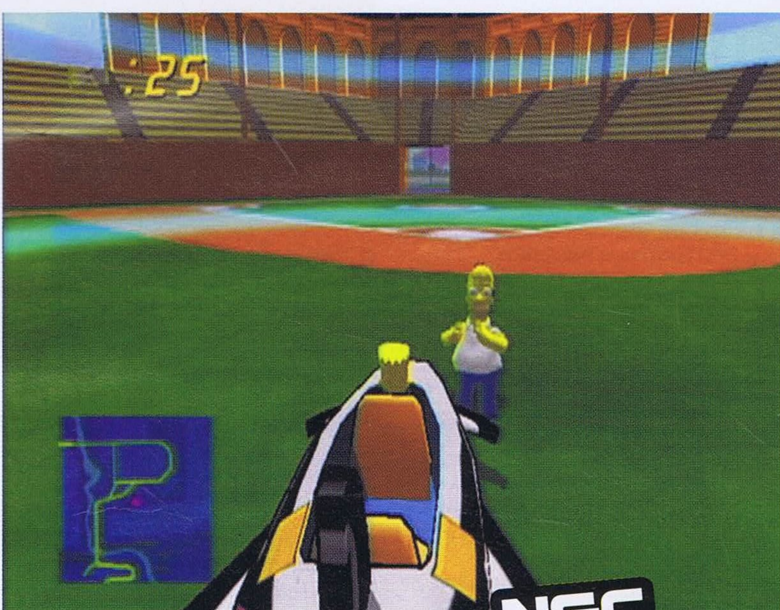
STARCOM TEAM

To unlock this bonus racing team, you must successfully complete the game in the XG Career mode.

QUICK START

To get a jump start when you begin a race, hold Forward during the countdown without pressing the accelerator. As soon as 'Go' appears, hit the accelerator.





THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

SAFE DRIVING
Fancy a nice $250 bonus? Simply make it to the destination in question without hitting any more than two cars. If you manage to do this successfully then you'll also be rewarded with a handy five extra seconds on your timer. Wow.

SHORTCUTS
Keep your eyes peeled for tyre marks on roadside sections of grass, as these nearly always indicate a shortcut.

EXTRA TIME
To add a miserly two seconds to your game clock run over old rich man Monty Burns' bus-stop vestibules. Needless to say the old scroat isn't releasing too many hounds after that little lot.

VANDALISM
Hit the big time by destroying 16 mailboxes, trees or other wayside items and you'll be rewarded with a $1000 bonus and five extra seconds on the clock. See, wanton vandalism can pay off.

NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

I've been using the Slave 1 ship in Rogue Leader and have found that you need to aim a little bit below the aiming guide to get the lasers to shoot accurately.

Andrew Lewis, Streatham



Specific gaming medicine dispensed by NGC's clinical psycho...



Dr Kitts,
How do I pull off that switch of positions in *Wave Race: Blue Storm*? You know, the one I keep seeing on the adverts.
Jeremy Downs, via email

Dr Kitts breeds an alligator with a cheeky little monkey…
Your dilemma is troubling, yet easy to answer. When riding the waves, I would suggest performing what we in the trade affectionately call 'the cowboy'. Simply hold down B and then rotate the control stick anti-clockwise. This will force your character to swing round to the front of the jetski and ride it like a good cowboy does.



Dr Kitts,
I've got an import copy of *Spider-Man* and I'm stuck on the big boss fight against the Shocker. No matter how many times I try to attack him, he keeps getting me with those shocker rings he shoots out. What should I do to beat him?
James Smith, via email

Dr Kitts ponders purchasing used surgical equipment from an internet auction site…
Less haste is your answer, young sir. Hold back and make sure that you're quite literally swinging when he's firing those shocker rings at you, and you'll be fine. Then, after he does his little whirlwind jig, jump in and attack. Remember: up in the air when he shocks, down on the ground when he's not. Hmm. That rhymes. Almost.

Dr Kitts,
Okay, so how do you get this secret pushbike that all my friends reckon is hidden in *Crazy Taxi*?
Gary Thorne, Cardiff

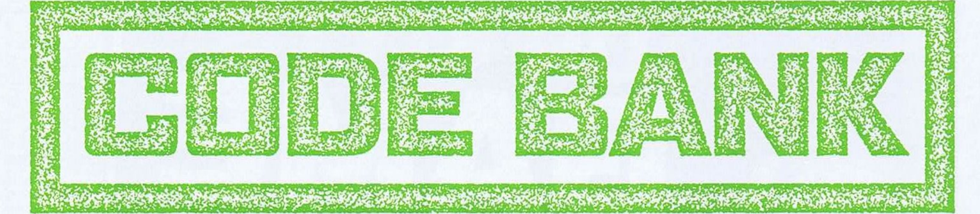
Dr Kitts flicks absently through the latest issue of Justin Webb's .50 Calibre Handguns of Choice…
This one's well known, I believe. Hold L and R at the character selection screen. Release L, then release R. Hold L and R again, then release them simultaneously. Then, press A. You should hear a ringing sound – that means you're 'bang on', as I believe you youngsters say.

Dr Kitts,
How do you get the all-star all-world team in *2002 FIFA World Cup*?
Simon Rudyard, Bristol



Dr Kitts watches you sleep…
First, you need to unlock all of the continent star teams (Africa, America, Asia and Europe) by winning the World Cup with a team from each continent. Once you've got all four, the all-world team will be yours to play with. To be honest, you should be wasting your time on ISS 2, not the FIFA series – but what does an old cove like me know?





Your last resort – cheat codes to save your skin…



THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

To play as the special secret holiday characters, you'll need to **reset your Gamecube's internal clock to these dates**:

- For Happy New Year Krusty: **01/01**
- For Happy Halloween Bart: **31/10**
- For Happy Thanksgiving Marge: **2/11**
- For Merry Xmas Apu: **25/12**



Hold down the L and R buttons on the options screen, and then enter the following codes to unlock more Springfield goodies:

- To play as 2D characters: **X, X, X, X**
- For lots of extra paper money: **Y, Y, Y, Y**
- To turn off the map: **Y, B, B, X**
- For night-time driving: **A, A, A, A**
- To play as the frankly delightful Thanksgiving Marge Simpson (regardless of the game clock settings): **B, B, X, X**
- Play as New Year's Krusty (regardless of the game clock settings): **B, B, X, Y**
- Play as Halloween Bart (regardless of the game clock settings): **B, B, X, A**
- Play as Xmas Apu Nahasapeemapetilon (again, regardless of the game clock settings): **B, B, X, B**
- Play as Smithers driving Monty Burns' car: **B, B, Y, Y**
- Drive the nuclear bus: **B, B, Y, A**

SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE

Enter these codes in the cheat menu (found in Specials) for the in-game cheats:

- Enable the Pinhead Bowling training level: **HEADEXPLODY**
- Make the game enter slow-motion mode when you hit an opponent: **DODGETHIS**
- Play as a teeny tiny Spider-Man: **SPIDERBYTE**
- Play as a big-headed and big-footed Spider-Man: **GOESTOYOURHEAD**
- See the enemies with big heads and feet: **JOELSPEANUTS**
- Play in a scientist skin: **SERUM**
- Play in a police officer skin: **REALHERO**
- Play in a helicopter pilot's skin: **CAPTAINSTACEY**
- Play in a thug model skin: **KNUCKLES**
- Play in an alternative thug model skin: **STICKYRICE**
- Play in yet another thug model skin: **THUGSRUS**

ROGUE LEADER

- For infinite lives, enter **JPVI?IJC** then **RSBFNRL**
- To open all the standard missions, enter **!??QWTTJ** then **CLASSIC**
- To unlock the Death Star Escape mission, enter **PYST?OOO** then **DUCKSHOT**
- To play the Asteroid Field level, enter **TVLYBBXL** then **NOWAR!!!**
- To access Triumph of the Empire, enter **AZTBOHII** then **OUTCAST!**
- For the Revenge on Yavin mission, enter **OGGRWPDG** then **EEKEEK!**
- To fly the TIE Fighter, enter **ZT?!RGBA** then **DISPSBLE**
- To pilot the Imperial Shuttle (on the Triumph of the Empire and Revenge on Yavin missions), enter **AJHH!?JY** then **BUSTOUR**

EXTREME G3

- **Unlimited shields and turbos:** Press **L + R, Z, L + R, Z** after 'Press Start' appears on the title screen. This effect lasts for only one race and must be re-enabled each time.
- **Always win XG career mode races:** Press **R, L, Z, L, R, Z, R, L, Z** after 'Press Start' appears at the title screen. This effect lasts for only one race each time you use it, and must be re-enabled every time you start a new race. Whaddapain.
- **Win the next race:** Press **L + R + Z, L + R, Z, L + R + Z** after 'Press Start' appears at the title screen. This effect lasts for only one race and must be re-enabled before the next one starts. Again.
- **Double prize money:** Press **L, R, Z, L, R, Z, L + R** after 'Press Start' appears at the title screen. This effect lasts for only one race and must be re-enabled before the next one sta… well, you know.
- **Extreme lap challenge:** Press **L, R, L, R, L, R, Z, L + R** at the main menu. This effect lasts for only one race and must be re-enabled before the next one.

NGC
READER KNOWLEDGE!

In The Simpsons Road Rage, you can knock Jebidiah Springfield's head off if you bash into the statue. Not much, I know, but it makes me laugh!

Dan Egan, London

NGC YOUR TOP TIPS

YOUR TOP TIPS Share the knowledge and bag yourself a prize…

Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret or quirky thing in one of your games? Then send it into us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our new Readers' Tips section – just like the tips you've been reading. In return, if your tip is the number one readers' tip, we'll send you a Gamecube game of your choice. Sound good? Then don't hesitate – do it!

HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

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AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

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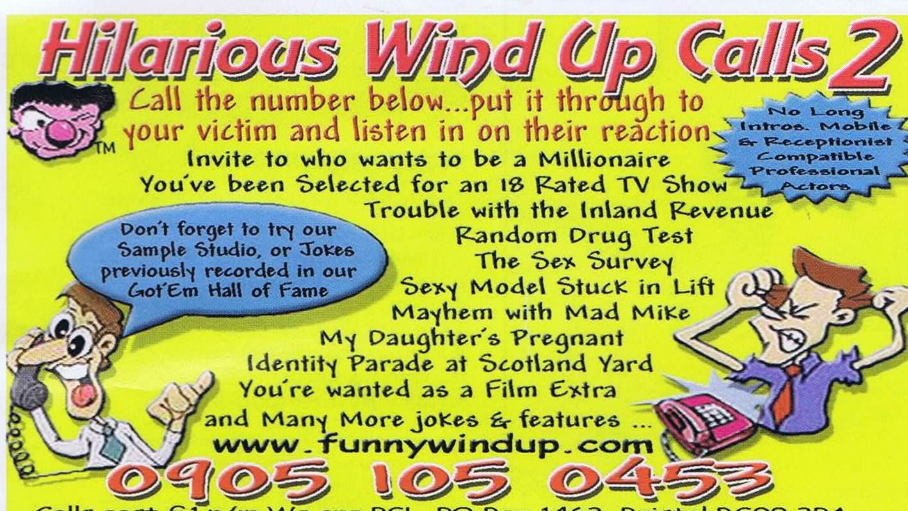
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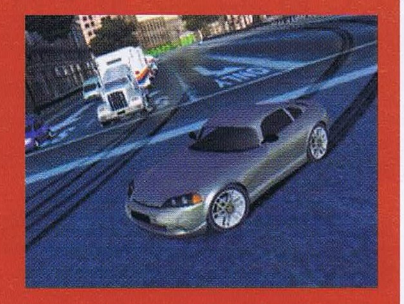
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NGC GUARANTEE
THE FIRST EVER GAME LEAGUES - AND STILL THE BEST

I'M THE BEST

1 STAR PERFORMANCE

May has been and gone, GC Day saw old ladies battling to the death over controller pads and memory cards, and burly men with tattoos and hooks for hands were seen to weep openly in the streets. Yup, Gamecube fever has held the nation in its clammy purple grip, and by the time you read this, you'll already have clawed your way through *Rogue Leader* and *Smash Bros*



– er, wouldn't you? Yeah, 'course. Which means you need to send scores into the world's finest gaming leagues.

We're still waiting to kick things off properly, though – thanks to the magic of printing lead times, we're actually writing to you *from the past!* – so don't fret if your scores haven't cropped up in the leagues. The simple fact is, we're still putting them all together. Give it time, though. Give it time… Next month it gets *reeeeeeeally* interesting.



2

Greener's well and truly gone to the 'other side', and his old desk is now littered with the collection of small animal skulls Kittsy picked up on his last visit to the army firing range – but The Green Machine's record of 125,140,000Gs in *Luigi's Mansion* remains intact. Although **Paul Roger**'s score of 117,035,000Gs came *preeeetty* close. In fact, if no other reader can beat it by next month, we're going to celebrate by handing him a prize. But we want more. We want the kind of gaming talent that would make Geraint cry like a girl, a degree of skill so mesmerisingly anal that your skin has taken on an opaque yellow hue, your claw-like hands have fused to the pad, and your eyes have turned into jet-black holes. Not much to ask, is it? So, send your 'performances' to the usual address – no 'fiddling', please – and we'll print the best one next 'ish'. Come on. You know it makes sense.







3 HOW TO PROVE YOUR ACHIEVEMENT

When sending us evidence of your gaming achievements, it's useful to follow these steps…

PHOTOGRAPHS

If you're sending us photographic evidence:

1. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) to prevent it from reflecting off the screen.
2. Make sure there's no sunlight coming into the room.
3. Use a fast film (a 200 or 400 ASA).
4. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
5. Point at the screen and click away.

PLEASE NOTE: In the past we've had experience of certain scamps 'fiddling' with their photographic evidence, so this time round we're being extra-specially (is that right?) careful. We would, in fact, welcome video evidence over photographic evidence. If, however, you can only send photos, be warned: any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification, and jeering. Harsh but fair, we feel.

VIDEO

If you're going to be sending us the evidence that comes on a tape, follow these instructions carefully:

1. Plug the TV lead from the Gamecube into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Once everything is switched on, find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After completing and recording the challenge, send us the tape (rewound back to the beginning if you please).

NGC YOUR BEST PERFORMANCE

4 HERE'S MY BEST PERFORMANCE…

LUIGI'S MANSION

Total number of Gs ....
Time taken to beat final boss ....
....

WAVE RACE

Aspen Lake best race time..........
Lost Temple Lagoon stunt score ....
Southern Island lap time..........

ROGUE LEADER

Battle of Endor kills..........
Death Star Attack accuracy ....
Star Destroyer fastest time ....

TONY HAWK'S 3

The Foundry highest score ....
Canada highest trick combo..........
Rio highest score..........

SONIC 2

Juggernaut Level number of rings ....
Escape from the Military Base best time..........
....

CRAZY TAXI

Ten Minute Mode most money..........
Crazy Jump longest jump..........
Crazy Drift combo..........

Name ....

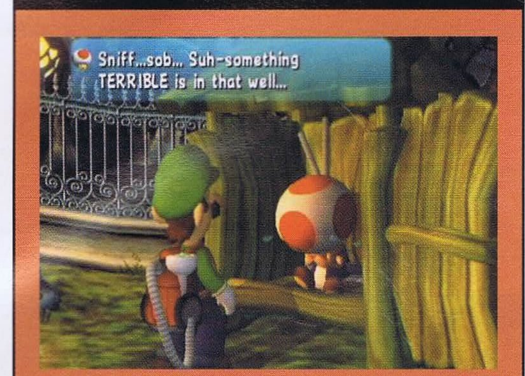
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LUIGI'S MANSION



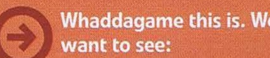
Hey, it ain't *Mario Sunshine*, but *Luigi's Mansion* offers levels of enjoyment on a par with Kylie at the Brits. It also deals itself in with massive scope for challenges. So, here's a couple to get you started…

- **See how many Gs you can notch up at the end of the game.**
- **See how long it takes you to dispose of the final boss.**

We'll need cast-iron proof of both of these in either photographic or video form – and for the boss encounter, we'll only actually accept videos. Take a look over at the previous page for tips on how to record your triumphs.

WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM





Whaddagame this is. We want to see:

- **Your best race time on Aspen Lake in easy mode.**
- **Your best stunt score on Lost Temple Lagoon.**
- **Your best lap time on Southern Island.**

Fancy it? Again, we'll need cast-iron proof of your achievements – video is our choice medium, although we may also accept some photographic evidence as long as it hasn't been 'altered'.

STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER

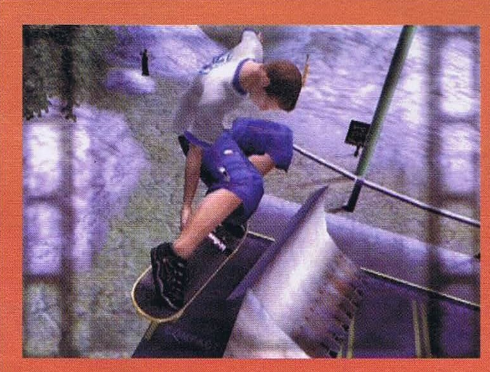


Star Wars. It's the best of things. Except for The Phantom Menace, which was pure, unadulterated crud. You're just bound to have this welded to your GC's disc tray, so we want the following:

- **Most kills on Battle on Endor (remember, you must achieve a minimum of a Bronze medal).**
- **Highest accuracy on Death Star Attack.**
- **Fastest time achieved taking out the Star Destroyer in Razor Rendezvous.**

Hey! Travelling through hyperspace ain't like dustin' crops, boy. Whatever relevance that has to anything at all, ever.

TONY HAWK'S 3



Yeah, yeah, yeah, we all think we can recite the rule book when it comes to grinding, ollying and spunky-twallying, but just how good are you really at skateboarding Hawk-style? What's your:

- **Highest point score on The Foundry.**
- **Highest trick combo on the Canada level.**
- **Highest score on the Rio level.**

Remember, Tony Hawk's 3 is blinkin' hard, so you'll need to put in the hours – once you have, get us your proof of the end screen in either photographic or, preferably, videographic form. Ta very much.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2

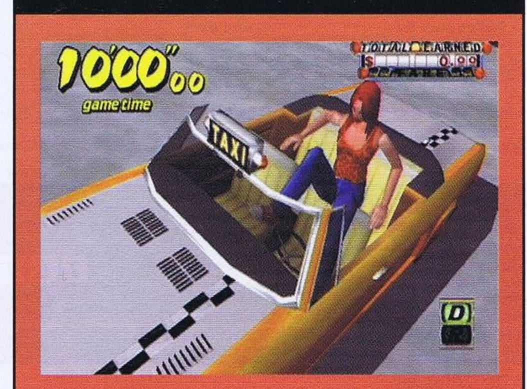


Sega's spiky superhog didn't amaze us nearly as much as we would have liked, but his sequel lends itself very nicely indeed to I'm The Best. So, we'd like you to investigate further:

- **How many rings you can clock up at the end of the Juggernaut level (the very first one).**
- **What time you can notch up on Escape from the Military Base.**

Only the fastest need apply for this challenge. And we'll need video evidence for both of these beauties, too.

CRAZY TAXI



Okay, so it might be a bit on the ancient side by now, but it's still great fun and about as ripe for challenging as any launch game out there. Which means we want you to see:

- **How much money you can nab in the Ten Minute Mode.**
- **What your longest jump is in Crazy Jump.**
- **What your highest Crazy Drift combo is.**

For this one, we'll accept photographic or video evidence, but we won't accept 'fiddled-with' photos and we won't accept bribes, either. You know who you are… Well, on second thoughts, it depends how much you're offering.

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If you thought *that* was good, get some of this…

MORE ZELDA?



Pages more, including **exclusive new screenshots** and detailed analysis of **the game's levels, battles** and **enemies**!

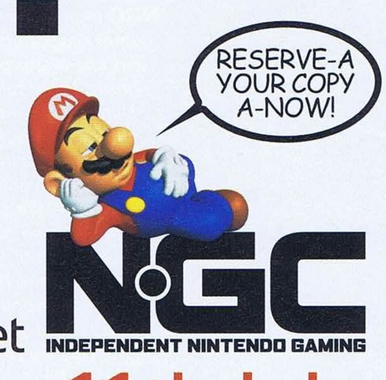


MORE MARIO?

We **go to town** on Mario's super-sequel with **screenshots exclusive to NGC** and unmissable new info – **get in!**

MORE ON EVERYTHING?

Next issue, we've got **more on the biggest games of 2002** – plus another unmissable **free gift, exclusive to NGC!**



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STAR LETTER

WIN YOURSELF A BRAND-NEW GAMECUBE GAME!



'Unfathomable'

Having had the good fortune to play a Japanese version of *Resident Evil* recently, I think I can safely say something I never thought I'd find myself saying: wait for the English-language version!

As fans of the series will know, much of the background story comes from the letters and notes collected throughout the game; these only appear in Japanese, though, and are – to the majority of importers – unfathomable. A shame, as there seems to be a brand-new sub-plot buried in the game from what I could tell.

With this in mind, I was pleased to see your No-Spoiler Guarantee in **NGC**/68 – the last thing I want is that sub-plot spoiled for me. Now I can await the UK version safe in the knowledge that the sub-plot won't have been revealed already.

Stuart Lean, Guernsey

Way back when the NGC team used to read games magazines, that was one of our pet hates: being told things we wanted to find out for ourselves or, worse, being shown the ending of a game. With NGC, we've tried to ensure that we take apart games for you, but don't spoil them. We're glad you like the way we're doing things. Ed



△ **Is *Starfox* going multi-format? FORGET THAT, PEDRO!**

'Final, crushing'

After receiving my Gamecube, I was given a whole load of free paper-based handouts. I was pretty happy with my lot – until, on closer inspection of the information card, I noticed something horrifying. The card said that any games listed with an asterisk next to them were exclusive to Gamecube… but *Starfox* didn't have one. I repeat: *it didn't have one*. Is this the final, crushing confirmation that Rare are going multi-format? Or is there something even more mysterious at work?

Arun Rao, King's Lynn

Nah. Plain old mistake, that. Starfox is Gamecube-bound, no doubt about it – have a gander at our previews section for more on how it's coming along. Don't worry about Rare going multi-format either… at least not yet. The rumours might be persisting, but we have it on good authority that nothing's likely to happen for a good while yet. Ed

'Before I started'

Okay. That poster that came free with issue 67 with Spidey on the one side and all your covers ever on the other… on the cover of issue 24, you reckoned there were going to be four Mario games in 1999. The four were: *Mario Party* (check), *Smash Bros* (check), *Super Mario 64 2* (er…), and *Super Mario RPG 2* (er, what?). Admittedly, that issue came out before I started reading **NGC**, but surely there's some sort of mistake, right?

Jeremy Young, via email

Ah, yes. Fact is, way back in NGC/24, there were four Mario games. Shigsy himself talked about wanting to do a follow-up to the seminal Mario 64, while – if we remember rightly – Square and Nintendo were at one of their on stages in the on-off relationship they've had since the SNES era. They even confirmed to Jap mags in May 98 that Mario RPG 2 was "close to being finished". Presumably "close to being finished" means something different in Japan. Like "not even in development". Ed

TXTUS

New text service! Send your messages to 86188 – and we'll email you back! Simply start every txt message with ngc…

Bonus Letters

What's with all this 'à la' stuff you're using?
Stephen Lang, via email
It's French. Ed

I'm Jeremy The Fish.
David Wheatley, via email
Nurse! Ed

The N64's power bar used to light up like a child's face when he first tasted ice-cream.
Daniel Rouse, via email
Thanks for that, Charles Dickens. Ed

If you still hate it, find a large, solid object and hit yourself with it.
Richard Larsen, via email
Sounds like a plan. Ed

I'm disturbed by your comment on The Phantom Menace in the last issue: "Pure, unadulterated crud"? Very harsh. It's an amazing film – better than half the films ever created.
Toby Bishop, via email
That's a lot of films. Ed

Might I have a word in your ears?
Oliver Ingram, London
How about a word in our noses? Ed

'Bog standard'

You may well be interested to learn that Puddle of Mudd's recent video for their song Blurry stars two bog-standard grey N64 controllers. That is all.

Migs Wallace, via email

Is that right? (Desperately searches the web to try and find out who the hell Puddle of Mudd are.) Oh, Puddle of Mudd… Sure. Blurry. Right. Cough. Ed



△ **Nofriendo. We get it, yeah. Yak, yak, yak. Oh, when will these people learn? WHEN? WHEN?**

'Funny'

I got this T-shirt while on holiday in Canada. Because I thought it was funny. Hope you like it.

Tom Derrick, via email

Canadians must be among the funniest people on the planet. Just look at John Candy. Er, anyone? Ed

'Proud owner'

Look at this! If you go to www.jacksonguitars.com, you'll be able to see a guy who made himself a Zoraxe guitar – as played by Zora Link in *Majora's Mask*.

Dominic Thompson, Newcastle

We've seen this before – but it's still great. We asked Paul if he fancied playing it in his next gig. He sort of smiled then backed out of the office. Ed





HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Thanks to everyone else who wrote, emailed and texted us this month.

You included: Alex Filipowski, via email; Dave Harris, via email; Tom Sergeant, Henley; Christopher Sheehan, via email; Christian van der Lekker, Holland; Leo Coyle, via email; Abe Radloff, Australia; Ross Arnott, Cheltenham; Andy, via email; Eddie, via email; Sukhraj Singh, Ealing; Sabreen Bedi, via email; Shinto, via email; Alexander McNary, Stoke-on-Trent; Colonel Tom, via text; Wesley Mackinder, via email; A Gow, Dundee; Edward Holt, via email; Chris Bartlett; via email; Max Wates, Hastings; Simon, via text; Ant, via text; Andrew Giddon, West Sussex; Taras Groves, via email; Matthew Metcalfe, via email; John McIntosh, London; Edward Evans, London; Alex Hall, via email; David


△ Pixels ahoy! PS2 sword-game *Barbarian* in action – what Saffire did next.


△ Play.com: cheap games, but you'll have to wait.


△ We like the ads, even if they are a bit Third Placey.

'Featured'

Way back in **NGC**/41, you featured the first shots of a *Rainbow Six*-style game for Gamecube. It was from Saffire and was set on a subway train – remember it? I've heard nothing since the initial announcement – any chance you might be able to fill me in on the details?
Patrick Magee, via email

Ah yeah – we remember this. The reason it's never appeared is probably because it was never supposed to be a Gamecube game, more of an approximation of what Gamecube could do. If you're after the new* Rainbow Six *game, have a gander at* Splinter Cell *in Previews this month. If you're after the next Saffire game, sit tight for – yep –* Barbarian, *their head-lopping take on the 80s sword-'em-up for PS2 and, maybe, Gamecube. Ed

TXTUS
It only costs 25p per text! And from next issue we'll be starting text-only competitions – so get texting us at 86188.

'Virtually no-one'

I think it's worth pointing out that Wales ain't such a bad place. Admittedly, the north, west and east of Wales are terrible – they go for all that speaking-Welsh crap – but South Wales rules! Virtually no-one speaks Welsh in this area. It's absolutely brilliant.
Phil Treen, South Wales

Housewives' favourite (and noted Welshman) Geraint Evans replies: "I've got a sharpened leek reserved especially for idiots like you… CYMRU AM BYTH!" Ho ho ho. Love the Welsh sense of humour. It's so… well, it's just so. Ed

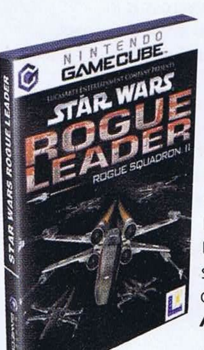
Bonus Letters

I know what you did last night!
"BenitaFree", via email
Geraint been on the pull again, has he? Ed

Turn to page 85 in issue 66 – doesn't Tim look just like Brian (the one with spiky hair) from Westlife? He does, y'know.
Ryan Sadler, via email
Exactly the same. Except I'm better looking. Ed

Does anyone actually make you laugh in Grintendo?
Daniel Rudi Sovik, Coventry
Turn the page to see. Ed

Maybe you could put his email in your mag so that readers could abuse him.
Andy Pandy, via email
Harsh. But fair. Ed



'Selling German'

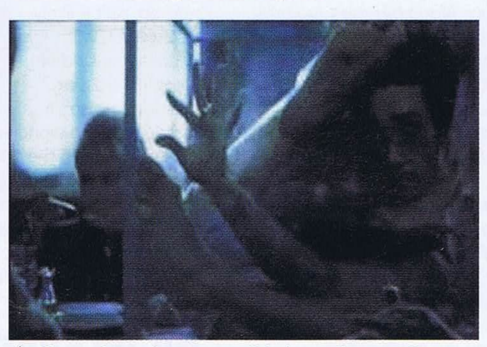
Following Andrew Parker's letter in **NGC**/67 about Toys 'R' Us selling German copies of *Lylat Wars*, I found out this month that Game were selling NTSC copies of *Rogue Squadron*!
Alex Morris, Fleet

As Jud often says when we ask him how his complex gun-running operation is structured: "There ain't nothin' illegal 'bout it if they don't catch yer!" Not sure that answers your question, to be honest, but we're pretty sure Game wouldn't knowingly sell import copies of titles. Ed

'Even cheaper'

Here's a deal: if you go to www.play.com, you can buy Gamecube games that retail at 40 quid for £33 – including delivery. That's even cheaper than the deals you pointed out at www.amazon.co.uk last month. The only downside is that it takes five days for delivery. Still… Er, by the way, I don't work for Play or anything.
Joe, via email

Thanks for clearing that one up. Ed


△ Glass cubes: advert or terrible form of torture?

'Do their stuff'

Well, everyone was slagging off Nintendo for not marketing the Gamecube, but they were playing a neat little waiting game: let Microsoft do their stuff with Xbox, then pounce! TV adverts, posters, free CD-ROMS in every shop, a countdown to 'Gamecube Day' in Virgin, a great Nintendo Europe website with videos and screenshots… and the icing on the cake – 130 quid!
Alex Blyth, via email

And it's all driven by ex-NGC nutter Mark Green, did you know that? Yep, Greener gave Gosen and his cronies one hell of a talking to and now they're coming up trumps! (Note: this might be a lie.) Ed

CORRECTION CORNER

Mistkaes wot we dun. (Don't write in about that one.)



I was flicking through my issue of **NGC**/67 when I noticed a mistake in the *Tarzan Freeride* review. In the "If You Like This…" section you said that in that very issue *Tony Hawk's 3* was rated 93, yet in the review you only gave it 87. So who're you going to put the blame on this time, eh?
Luke Hesketh, Blackpool

Dan'll do. Ed





In **NGC**/66 pages 71, 72 and 73 Andrew Simmonds sent some new scores. How come he happens to live in Hampshire, Halifax, London and Edinburgh at the same time? Strange or what
Ryan Morley, Nottinghamshire

He's a gypsy. Ed

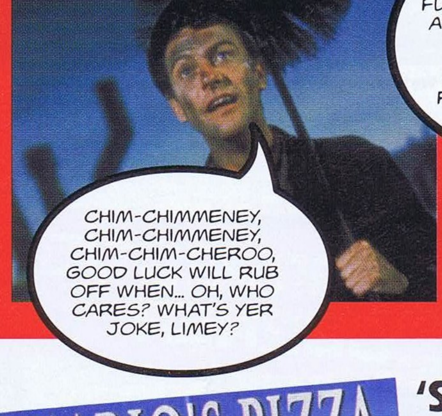
Alberto Lunde Sanchez, Norway; Nicolas Masset, Belgium; Christo Bristow, Anglesey; Rob Styles, via email; Michael Housen, Stoke Newington; Flic Yates, Northants; John Mace, Hampshire; Gerard Mitchell, London; Simon Martin, Cambridge; Chris, Australia; Nicki Tweedale, via email; Tom Dawber, via email; Ben Evans, via email.

Grintendo!

EVERY MONTH, WE'LL TEST YOUR JOKES ON A FAMOUS CELEBRITY. IF THEY GIVE IT THE THUMBS UP, YOU WIN A GAME OF YOUR CHOICE. DEAL?
THIS MONTH: DAVID TAYLOR FROM LONDON

NGC SPECIAL GUEST BERT FROM MARY POPPINS

WRITE TO… GRINTENDO/MAILBOX/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW/OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK



Images: © Koala and © The Movestore



△ **Look… it's 'Mario', standing in front of the Leaning Tower of… er, Switzerland.**

'Spicy sausage'

Mazza has got himself a new job! It's true – have a gander at the free leaflet I've sent in. No wonder the guy hasn't been seen in his own game since *Mario 64* – he's too busy selling his 'Mario Special' (beef, pepperoni, ham, spicy sausage, green peppers, onions, mushrooms and black olives). I won't buy a pizza from anyone else.
Oliver Ingram, London

This appears to be that new 'adult' Mario we were hearing so much about. Goatee, checked shirt, Mafia connections. Ed

'Parallel'

In a bit of a retro-fit, I dragged out my old SNES yesterday for a bash on *Zelda: Link to the Past*. After happily hopping between Dark World and Light World for about an hour, I got thinking. Most of the *Zelda* games have featured parallel worlds, and I seem to remember Shigeru Miyamoto saying something about this being one of the themes in Gamecube *Zelda*. So, isn't it likely that *Zelda* GC will feature some kind of dimension crossing? And if it does, isn't it possible that one world will be cel-shaded and the other ultra-realistic? Is Shigsy teasing us by only showing the cel-shaded bits.
Daniel Stokes, Tamworth

Interesting conspiracy theory. But wrong. Ed

TXTUS
Remember, when you txt us, stick ngc… at the beginning of your message – that way we know it's definitely for us.

△ **No-one moaned about old *Zelda* being 'childish'…**

'Nit picking'

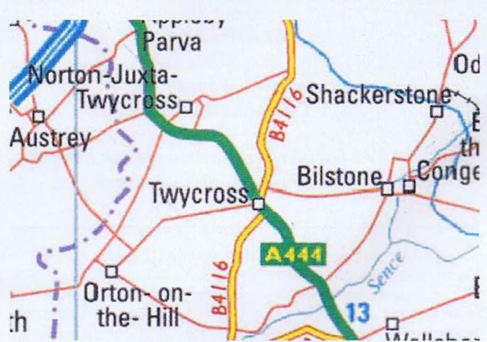
That buxom flying rodent from *Sonic Adventure 2* – is she called Rogue (as in "an oddball with a slightly mischievous propensity") or Rouge (as in "French for red")? The reason I ask is that I've seen both spellings in your publication before, and I don't know which one to believe. Nit picking, yes, but that's what we're here for.
Alun MacRae, via email

That'll be Rogue. As in "an unprincipled, deceitful, and unreliable person; a scoundrel or rascal". And, "a wandering beggar; a vagrant". And, "Mamma Mia, here we go again, my, my, how can I forget you?" Er, sorry. That's something different. Ed

'End of'

In response to James Lovatt's letter in **NGC**/67, I'd just like to justify my argument that Twycross is in Warwickshire by stating that, if you live in Twycross, your address reads: 12 Twycross St, Twycross, Warwickshire. End of argument.
Stephen Carvell, Melton Mowbray

Rubbish. We've checked with our UK Road Atlas (free when you spend £20 or more on Duckhams Hypergrade) and it says Leicestershire. Alright? Ed



△ **See that purple line? To the left is Warwickshire.**

SO TELL ME THIS…

Your specific gaming Qs answered by our Knowledge Automaton…

What's the beef on *Perfect Dark Zero* and *Conker's Bad Fur Day 2*, then? I can't find a thing about them anywhere.
Aaron Johnson, via email

Not sure what the 'beef' is, but the news on them is as follows:* Perfect Dark Zero *is coming along veeeeery slowly. Last we heard there had been some team problems. Look out for it some time in 2003. As for* CBFD2*… it's definitely an idea bouncing around the soundproof walls of Rare's HQ, but it won't see the light of day for a fair while.

1. Are Nintendo going to bring out a *Mario Party* game for GC?
2. Will there be a link-up between *Mario Kart Gamecube* and *Mario Kart Super Circuit*?
Jon Bailey, via email

***1. Yep –* Mario Party 4*. Get more on that in our previews section.
2. Mmm… wouldn't have thought so, but it seems like such an ideal opportunity for Nintendo to get online in a good way, that we'd be surprised if they didn't have something up their sleeves.***

1. Will I be able to use a Wavebird with my European Gamecube?
2. Will *Metroid Prime* make it to Europe in 2002?
Neil, Belgium

***1. Yep. US and Japanese pads will work with UK Gamecubes. It's just the games that won't.
2. Nintendo are promising a December release here, but we'll have to see. With Shigsy himself overseeing it, it's going to have to be perfect before they think about releasing it.***

Will there be any football management games for the Cube?
Daniel Bensen, Coventry

Yes! Codemasters have seen the light and are readying* LMA Manager *for 2003. The lack of a data-storing hard drive obviously counts out* Champ Man*, though, which to be honest, is the management sim we're really waiting for. Still, having* LMA *is still a pretty decent alternative.

1. When's *Resident Evil* out here?
2. When Retro finish *Metroid*, will they be going back to *Raven Blade*?
Paul Hambridge, via email

***1. Late August/early September.
2.* Raven Blade *is dead, we're afraid. Nintendo turned up at Retro one day, shut down three of their games (including the promising-looking* Car Combat*) and told them to concentrate on* Metroid*. (Not too much of a prob if you'd seen* Raven Blade*'s appalling in-game footage.)***

1. Will there be any *Grand Theft Auto* games on Gamecube?
2. What about *Destruction Derby*?
Paul Foy, Middlesex

***1. It's been rumoured, but DMA are quick to dispel any talk of it.
2. It's a possibility, but original developer Reflections are unlikely to be behind it.***

Are there any *Ogre Battle, Harvest Moon, Sin and Punishment* or *Custom Robo* sequels heading to Gamecube any time soon?
Rees, Kent

Sorry, but no. Not ever.



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NGC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY…

FIVE GAMES TO MAKE YOUR EYES BLEED

Gamecube isn't just about nice graphics – *it's about speed that crushes your skull and has dribble running up into your nose.* Get a load of these – the fastest games *ever*…



BURNOUT



SSX TRICKY



SONIC ADVENTURE 2



EXTREME G 3



WAVE RACE BLUE STORM



1 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

NINTENDO ■ NGC/68 ■ 95

Eye-singeing multiplayer battles, ingenious power-ups and moves, brilliant cameo appearances from just about every Nintendo character ever to set foot inside a cartridge, plus some of the sweetest looks yet squeezed from the Cube – *Smash Bros* is everything you went purple for and more. If people are telling you this is a game for kids then the fools plainly haven't played it.



2 WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM



NINTENDO ■ NGC/67 ■ 91

In PAL form this sodden sequel might suffer from some *tiny* frame-rate problems, but it's still a fabulous racer, replete with *the* most incredible water effects ever. Fast, dynamic, accessible and sublime to control, *Wave Race* is absolute magic.

3 LUIGI'S MANSION



NINTENDO ■ NGC/67 ■ 90

Mazza might have been late to the party this time round, but brother Luigi managed to ease the pain with this fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and Ghostbusters. It's maybe a bit short, but still ace.

4 SUPER MONKEY BALL

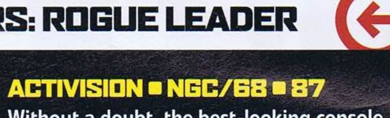




SEGA ■ NGC/67 ■ 88

Ingenious update of *Marble Madness*, with simians rolling around strange landscapes trying to collect 'nanas. Chuck in a monkey version of *Mario Kart*, pool, some golf and a tilting boxing ring with springy boxing gloves and you've got the weirdest, most wonderful Gamecube game out.

5 STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER



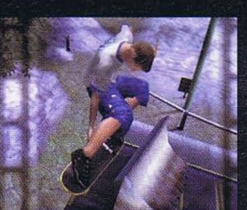


ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68 ■ 87

Without a doubt, the best-looking console game ever made, *Rogue Leader* also happens to be one of the slickest, most memorable Star Wars games of all time, bolting eye-popping renditions of the Battle of Hoth and the Trench Run onto silky smooth space battles. Get it in now.

6 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3





ACTIVISION ■ NGC/67 ■ 87

It's clearly a no-brainer of a PS2 conversion, but *Tony Hawk's 3* is so good it hardly seems to matter. Packed with unbelievable grinds and stunts, backed up by a mountain of hidden extras, and benefiting from vast skate parks, if you haven't tried *Hawk's* on for size before, now's the time.

7 SSX TRICKY

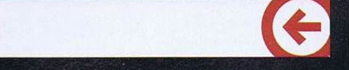




EA SPORTS ■ NGC/69 ■ 87

Like *Tony Hawk's*, this has got PS2 written all over it in big, fat neon letters, but it still manages to perform wonders with your Cube. Fast, spectacular courses, brilliant shortcuts and secrets and some timely mid-piste scrappage make this conversion brilliant, *brilliant* entertainment.

8 BURNOUT





ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 86

On the N64, we had to wait three years for a driving game. Now we've got a killer racer from day one: with lightning-fast, spectacular crashes, inch-perfect handling and one of the smoothest, most impressive engines around, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

9 PIKMIN





NINTENDO ■ NGC/69 ■ 85
Dreamily created using textures from Shigsy's own garden, *Pikmin* is a genius real-time strategy with multi-coloured vegetables, beautifully simple controls and expansive, tactile worlds. It's over a bit quickly if truth be told, but don't let that put you off: this is Nintendo brilliance.

10 ISS 2





KONAMI ■ NGC/68 ■ 83
This once-untouchable football giant makes its debut on Gamecube sporting a few nasty cuts and bruises, including a lack of pace, huge turning circles and 'sweet spots'. Even so, it still rates as a majestic example of footie in a disc, even though an *ISS* with faults is hard to stomach.

11 EXTREME G 3





ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 85
A bit of an underrated gem, *Extreme G 3* offers pulse-shattering speed, huge, sprawling, well-designed tracks, some ingenious – and surprisingly tactical – weaponry and eye-spanking visuals. It's a tiny bit soulless, and the multiplayer's a bit rank, but this is good stuff.



12 BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY





ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68 ■ 74
Okay, so *Smash Bros* pummels it so hard it's about ten feet into the canvas, but *Bloody Roar* still manages to offer some quick, exciting punch play, and comes with the added bonus of some dual-action characters. One of which changes into a rabbit. And another into a Gecko.

13 SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE









ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69 ■ 72
A brain-bendingly *terrible* camera threatens to do more than make your Spidey sense tingle, but this 3D adventure grows on you the more you play it, and for fans of the comics there are some really neat little touches, as well as timely comebacks for the likes of Scorpion and The Vulture.

14 SONIC ADVENTURE 2: BATTLE





SEGA/INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/67 ■ 70
It moves like greased weasel-turd, it looks beautiful, it's solid enough – but this sequel is underwhelming, dressed in next-gen gear but sporting Mega Drive-era ideas. It offers some intriguing GBA connectivity – shame more isn't made of this part of it.

15 CRAZY TAXI





SEGA/ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 70
It's as good as it was on Dreamcast and PS2, but that's just the point: *Crazy Taxi* is *old*, and nothing's been done to update it for its Gamecube release. Shame, because with a bit of polish this could have found a new lease of life – as it is, it's still excellent fun, if a little elderly.

16 NBA COURTSIDE 2002

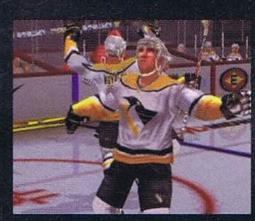




NINTENDO ■ NGC/68 ■ 79
Well, Nintendo might have called a day on Left Field, but the US developers have certainly gone out with a bang – shame it's basketball, really. If you're 'into' sport, you'll appreciate the gameplay parallels between this and *ISS*, otherwise it'll just seem like another boring hoop game.

17 NHL HITZ 20-02





MIDWAY ■ NGC/67 ■ 79
Ice hockey is probably the most acceptable of American sports, and *NHL Hitz 20-02* proves to be genuine fun in places, with super-slick, fast-paced puck action. Behind the scenes, this is great as well, with trade-ins, player creation and a neat behind-the-scenes documentary. Good stuff.

18 DAVE MIRRA BMX 2





ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 75
The problem with *Dave Mirra 2* is that it's simply not as good as PlayStation favourite *Mat Hoffman*. Which is a shame, because at its heart beats a decent game, packed with stunts and tricks, expansive arenas and a great soundtrack. But none of that is quite enough to make this a real must-buy.

19 BATMAN: VENGEANCE





UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67 ■ 70
You could find yourself pleasantly surprised by this 3D beat-'em-up featuring Bats and The Joker. In fact, you won't just find yourself surprised, you'll find yourself well entertained thanks to a clunk-free control system, some tidy graphics and plenty of corny voice acting from Mark Hamill.

20 DRIVEN



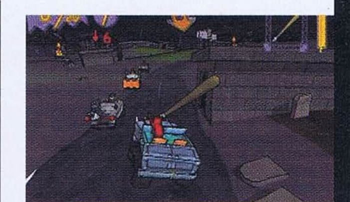


BAM! ■ NGC/68 ■ 60
Sneaking in at number 20 is this solid effort from BAM! – though don't expect to see it hanging round for very long. While the software numbers are somewhere around the 30 mark, you might want to give this street racer a go – especially for its decent New York track. Otherwise, forget it.

EVERY GAMECUBE GAME EVER ...RATED!



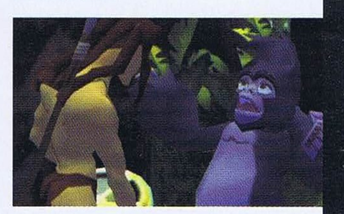
SPY HUNTER



CEL DAMAGE

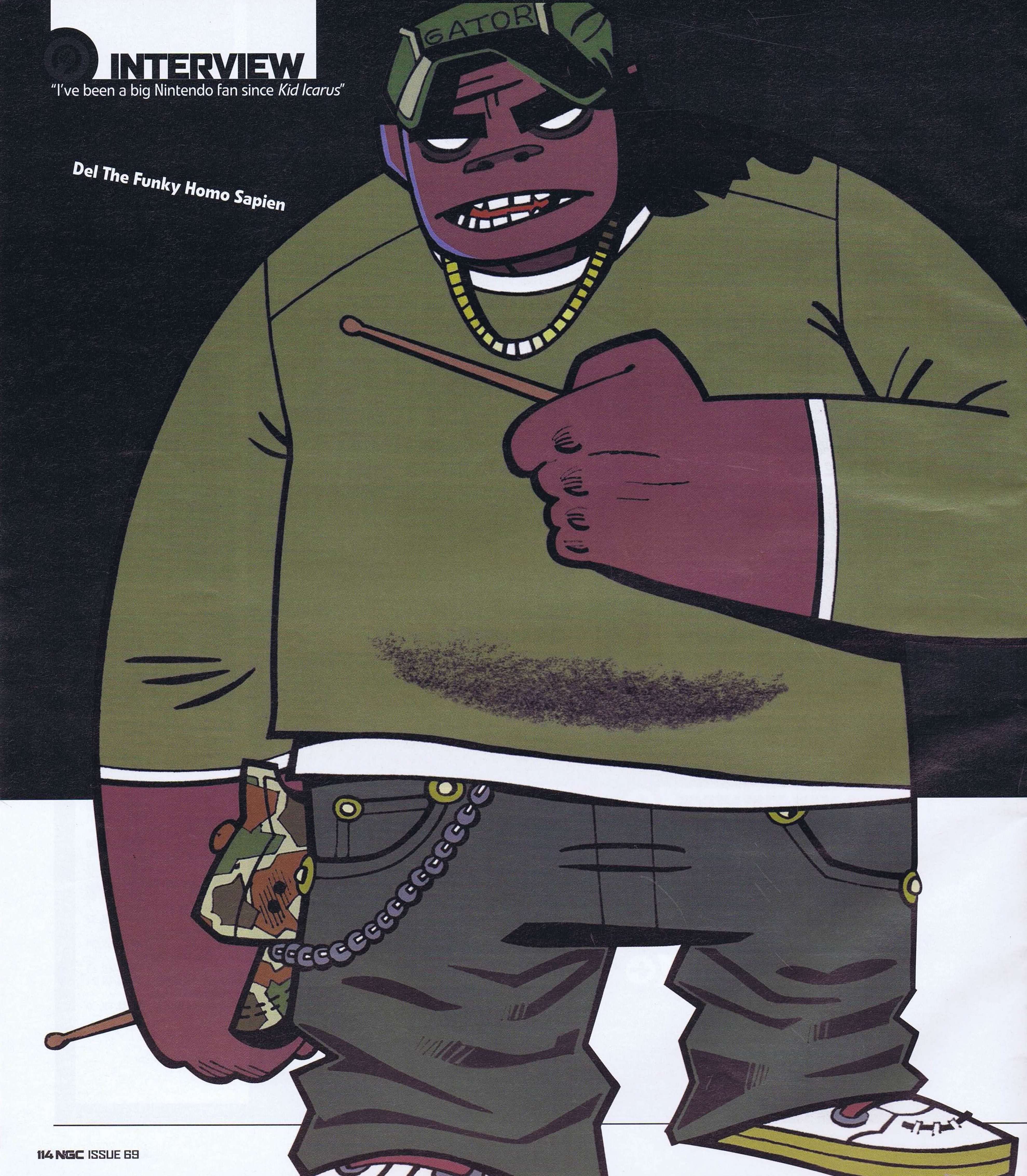


DRIVEN

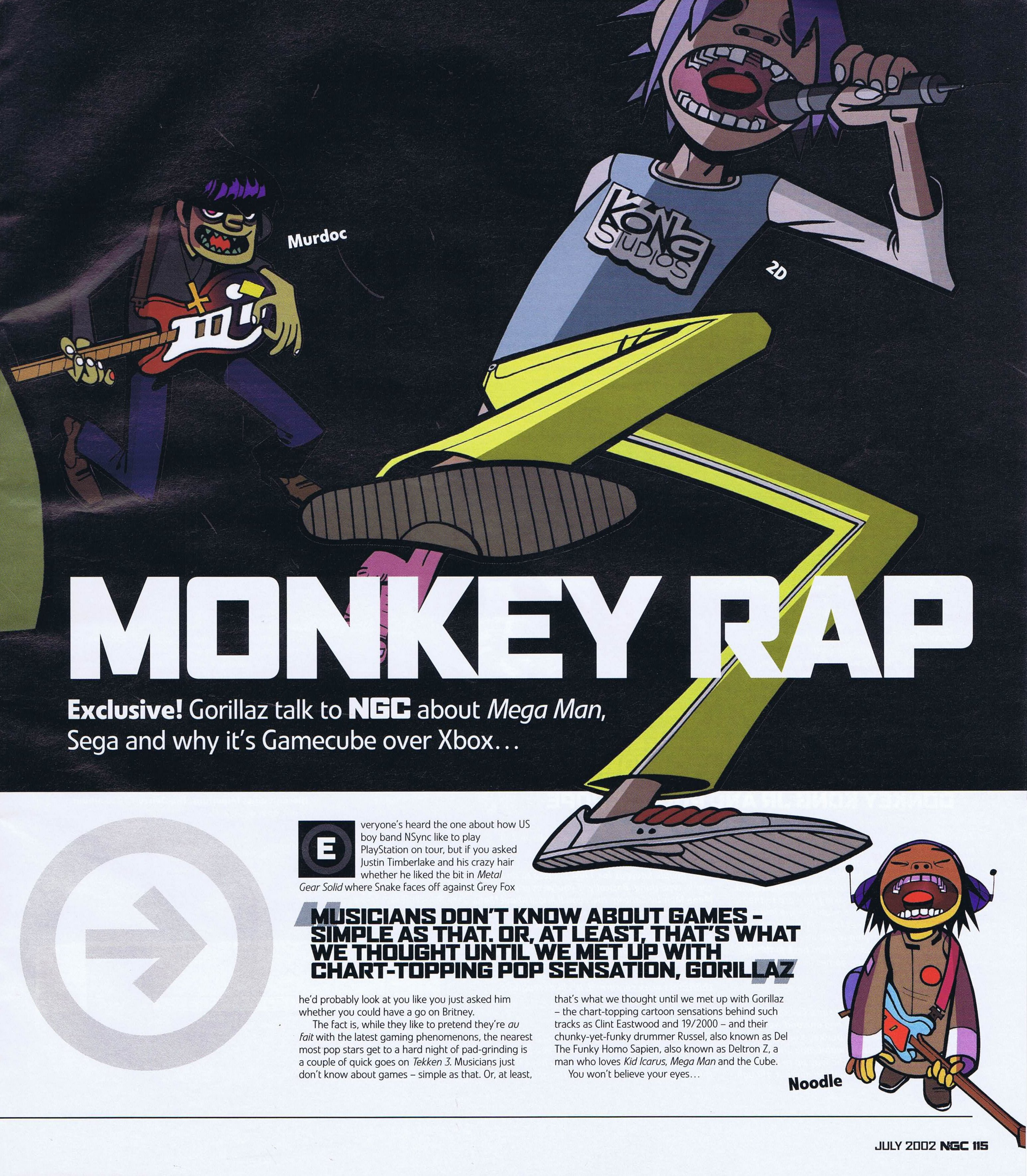


TARZAN FREERIDE

Cel Damage	NGC/68, 60
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Jeremy McGrath Supercross World	NGC/69, 20



Del The Funky Homo Sapien



MONKEY RAP

Exclusive! Gorillaz talk to **NGC** about *Mega Man*, Sega and why it's Gamecube over Xbox…

Everyone's heard the one about how US boy band NSync like to play PlayStation on tour, but if you asked Justin Timberlake and his crazy hair whether he liked the bit in *Metal Gear Solid* where Snake faces off against Grey Fox

"MUSICIANS DON'T KNOW ABOUT GAMES – SIMPLE AS THAT. OR, AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT WE THOUGHT UNTIL WE MET UP WITH CHART-TOPPING POP SENSATION, GORILLAZ"

he'd probably look at you like you just asked him whether you could have a go on Britney.

The fact is, while they like to pretend they're *au fait* with the latest gaming phenomenons, the nearest most pop stars get to a hard night of pad-grinding is a couple of quick goes on *Tekken 3*. Musicians just don't know about games – simple as that. Or, at least, that's what we thought until we met up with Gorillaz – the chart-topping cartoon sensations behind such tracks as Clint Eastwood and 19/2000 – and their chunky-yet-funky drummer Russel, also known as Del The Funky Homo Sapien, also known as Deltron Z, a man who loves *Kid Icarus*, *Mega Man* and the Cube.

You won't believe your eyes…



△ Sonic: one of Russel's favourite-ever characters…

Wait. You're a musician who knows his games. And Nintendo games at that.
Definitely. It got to a point about a year ago, though, where, to tell you the truth, I really lost a lot of interest in playing videogames in general. Everyone was trying to dead the Sega Dreamcast, and I'm a real Sega fan. In fact, I wanted Sega to give me a Dreamcast shirt that I could sport and go round being their mascot in!

"I'VE BEEN PLAYING AROUND SINCE COLECOVISION. I USED TO KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAD ONE AND WE'D PLAY GAMES LIKE DONKEY KONG JR AND ROCK 'N' ROPE"

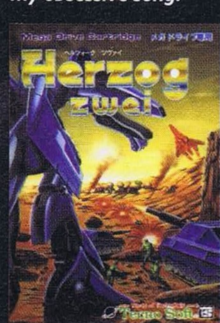
And what about now the Dreamcast is no longer around? What are you playing now?
Well, I got into playing games on my computer – because I upgraded it – but there's a bit of a different feel to them. Which is why I got interested in Gamecube. I was kinda looking forward to the Xbox too, but I was afraid it might see me ending up playing the same games I had on my computer. And I definitely ain't trying to get no PlayStation 2. Plus, I was a big Nintendo fan from back in the day when I was always playing games like Mega Man and Kid Icarus on the NES.

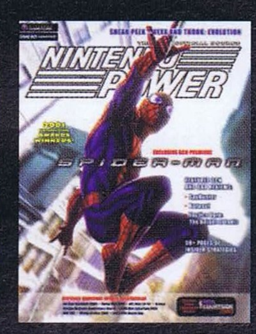
Was that your first system?
Nah, I've been playing around since ColecoVision. I used to know someone who had one and we'd be playing games like Venture, Donkey Kong Jr and Rock 'n' Rope. I've been through Game and Watch to the Turbo GFX 16 and all the way up to the next generation consoles now. Thinking about it, though, the NES was probably the one that I really started to play properly on. I mean, I'd play something like Zelda and be there for hours. I remember I had the first issue of Nintendo Power (American Nintendo mag – Knowledgeable Ed) that had the maps for Zelda in it. It wasn't just like turning it on for a few minutes to idle away some time any more – it was much more than that.

So what do you think of Gamecube?
Nintendo make the best games – that's a fact – but Sega make the best arcade games – so now that Sega's making things like Crazy Taxi and Sonic for Gamecube, I don't need anything else. I mean, I never ever thought I'd see Sega on a Nintendo machine! That's just crazy.

Why do Nintendo makes the best games, then?
There's just something special about the way Nintendo games play. I think it's that they like to come original and they like to think for themselves – they don't follow the trends.

As Del The Funky Homo Sapien, you made a song called Proto Culture which was all about games and referenced everything from Herzog Zwei to Bernie Stolar…
Oh yeah… for that one, I kind of figured that it would be people who were really into videogames that would get those names I was dropping. I mean, you've got to totally know your stuff to know who people like Bernie Stolar are. That was kinda like my obsessive song.

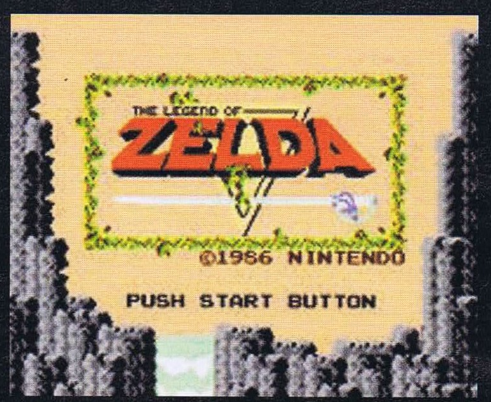




△ Herzog Zwei and the map-filled Nintendo Power.

Then you reinvented yourself as Deltron Z in Gorillaz…
Yeah, we had to do something that wasn't just what people knew us for. I just wanted to do like a comic-type thing. Basically, if you've ever played Mega Man by Capcom then you'll know about Mega Man X. That's basically the same game, but it's set in the future. The same characters, the same stuff, but in the future. That's how I designed the Deltron Z character I used and the whole basis of the album. We were talking about current issues and problems, but it was set in the future as far as all the characters were concerned. It's like creating a whole new genre.

So games influence your music?
Games are music! Making music is just like playing a fighting game. In a beat-'em-up you learn a lot of patterns or combos – in a song you have to bust out this combo on a keyboard with the notes. It's the same thought process that your brain goes through with either.



△ "I'd play something like *Zelda* and be there for hours."





GAME START
PASS WORD
OPTION MODE

△ *Mega Man X* has had a big influence on Russel.

It's been a while since the Gorillaz album was released. What's taking up your time now?
Well, I'm taking a step back from the pressures and stress of the music industry, and I'm getting back into languages. At the moment I'm concentrating on learning Japanese. I know a few bits, but I really need to brush up for those import games.

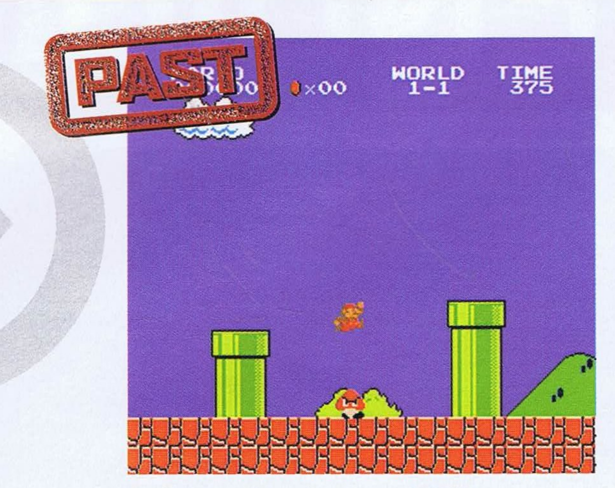
You import games?
Yeah. I'm also real interested in anime and I keep trying to make time to learn that properly. I do a bit here and there, but I need to take some time out and just get into it properly.

Gorillaz' self-titled album is out now on Virgin. Del's Both Sides Of The Brain is out now on Hieroglyphics Imperium. The Deltron 3030 album is out now on Ark 75.



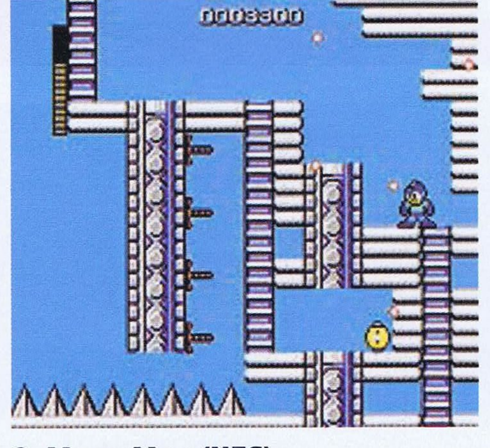
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Russel's favourite-ever games. And the ones he's keeping half an eye on.



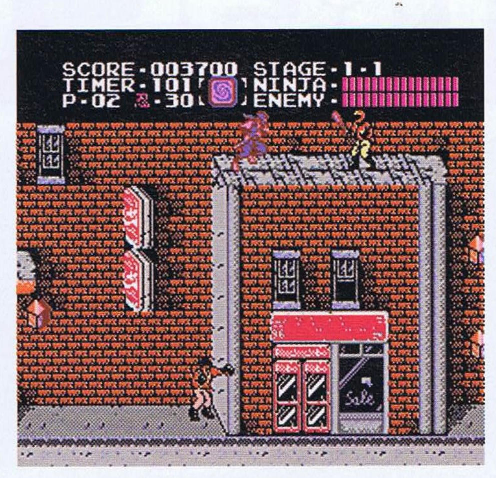
1. Super Mario Bros (NES)

"I remember the first time I discovered you could break out of the top of the screen by headbutting the bricks and it was just like, 'Wow!' I mean, you weren't cheating – the game was just allowing you to be really innovative in order to get an advantage."



2. Mega Man (NES)

"I used to love Mega Man. He was space-age, but never had that geeky element to him. Plus, in those platform games, you had to be pixel-perfect, and that meant you needed to be a lot more precise about things, spend a lot more time, than in most 3D games now."



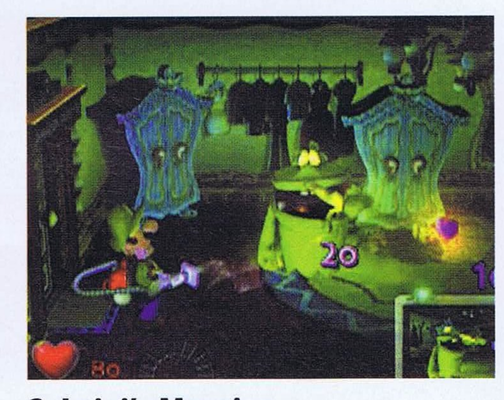
3. Ninja Gaiden (NES)

"This was a platform game, on the NES, and it took me absolutely ages to complete. It wasn't exactly the best game I ever played, and it wasn't that well known, but it was one of those games that's stuck with me."



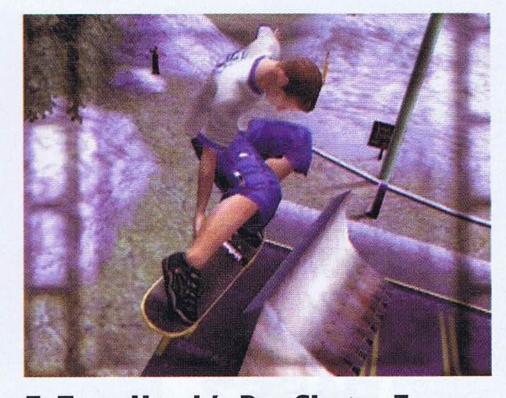
1. Sonic Adventure 2 Battle

"I'm still a Sega-head, and I know people say that *Sonic* isn't as complex as *Mario*, but it's still got graphics that force you to sit back and be amazed. And, come on, the first time you got that sensation of speed, you had to be in awe of it… even just a little bit."



2. Luigi's Mansion

"I see games these days and they're all FMV, all trying to look more and more realistic. *Luigi's Mansion* looks nice too, but it's got that real old-school gameplay, and takes you to a point where you don't care about the graphics, you just want to keep on playing."



3. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

"I'll be honest with you – sometimes I pull off some massive combos and get huge points on this and I didn't exactly mean to do it. But *Tony Hawk's 3* is a great game to just ride around on and get a feel for."



1. Metroid Prime

"This could be good, but remember I was saying about the graphics in games almost looking too good now? Well, when I heard they were updating *Super Metroid* on the SNES I was excited – I just hope they don't lose something when it makes the switch to 3D."



2. The Resident Evil series

"Oh, this is going to be beautiful when it comes to winter and you just wanna stay in and keep warm and play something dark. One of the first times a game really scared me was when that dog breaks through the window in the first one!"



3. Capcom vs SNK 2 EO

"I'm a huge fan of Capcom – I just love what they do with their artwork and characters. They always had the best characters, from *Strider* to *Street Fighter*, so I can't wait to see some 2D Capcom action on Gamecube!"

TALK TIME

Want to find out what it's *really* like to work in games development? We give one of GC's top developers an **NGC** mobile and stalk them for a day.



WHO IS... BRIAN PASS?

Brian is Production Co-ordinator at Activision, the gaming colossus behind the *Tony Hawk's* series, and is responsible for overseeing the company's games, as well as other admin and figures work. We caught up with him as the finishing touches were put to the firm's *Spider-Man*.

8.45AM

Morning, Brian!
Ugh. Hi there.
Are you in the office yet?
Give me a chance – I've only just got up. I'm at work from 10am to 7pm. Why don't you call me back in a hour or so?
Ah. Okay. Talk to you then.

10.42AM

Brian! How's it going?
Yeah, good.
Pleasant drive into work?
Actually, I walk. I live in Venice, which is only about eight blocks down the road from the office in Santa Monica. Which is where I am now.
Venice. Must be nice to live in Italy.
Er, that's Venice, Los Angeles.
Uh, yeah, obviously. So what's on the agenda?
Well, I've got a stack of emails to read.
Anything important?
Of course! I'm currently talking with our offices overseas, trying to arrange Spider-Man's foreign-language translations. Then I've got to get shots and builds out to our PR and marketing people.
What for?
Sales meetings.
Oh. We'll leave you to it. Talk to you later.

12.44PM

Guess who?
I can't possibly imagine.
Correct! Uh, we mean, it's NGC. So, did you get everything sorted this morning?
Yeah, no problems.
What are you up to now, then?
Just debating where to go for lunch. There's a whole bunch of us from the production department that like to go out for a bite to eat.
A business lunch, eh?
Not really. It's just nice to keep up to speed with what everybody's doing on the different projects.
So are you–
Oh, sorry, I'll have to stop you there. The guys are heading – WAIT... GUYS! Brrrrrrr...

2.17PM

It's-a me! Er, well, it's NGC. Again.
Afternoon.
What are you up to?



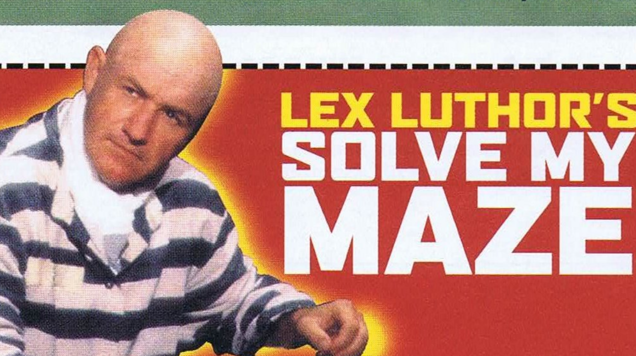
Right now I'm still dealing with the localisation for Spider-Man. Our developers at Treyarch have finished the coding so the translations are the last thing on the agenda.
You're the last port of call for *Spider-Man*?
Pretty much.
Exciting stuff. Was it a lot of hard work?
When a project like Spider-Man is in full swing, it's a huge job. We had 40 programmers, artists and scripters, with a core group of three producers here at Activision. Seven-day weeks and 1am finishes aren't unheard of.
Do *you* get much hands-on time with it?
I do get in and play the game, make suggestions at the early stages, but mine is more of a management role. We have a lead designer who makes decisions about where he wants the game to go, while I make sure it's going in the direction that we as the publisher want it to go.
How did you get into the job?
I studied film in college and worked in movies for 12 years doing camera work – I did some of the SFX for Starship Troopers.
Starship Troopers?!
Yeah. But the games industry was something that always interested me, and knowing what's going to look good on screen through a camera lens is analagous in many ways to what you see in games. There's actually a lot of crossover, especially on a film title like Spider-Man.
Bingo. Whatever that means.
(Silence).
We'll speak to you later...

4.41PM

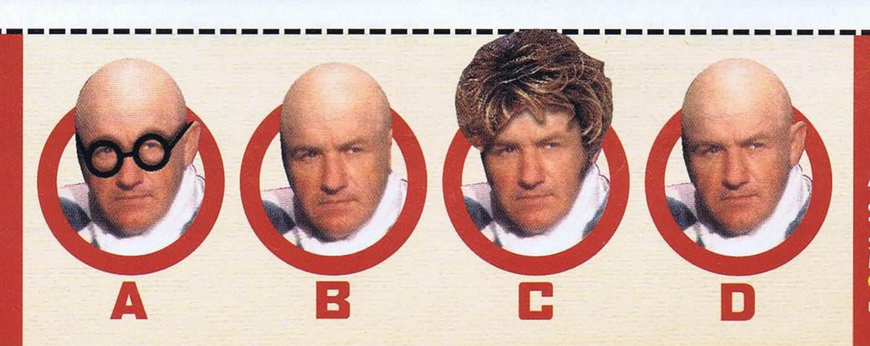
Hello?
Brian!
Hello.
About your job. You like it?
Oh, yeah. Very much. Every day usually brings something new and exciting. Plus, working on a big title like Spider-Man means I'll get some leeway as to what I want my next project to be.
Oh, sure. It works like that round here, too. Well, kind of. Well, not at all. So, the big question is: what's the next project?
I'm not really sure at the moment.
Spider-Man 2?
(Sound of laughter).
Not, eh?

6.07PM

Hello, Brian.
Ah, you just caught me.
Yeah?
Yeah. I'm about to head home. I've got to catch a flight tomorrow to visit our European offices and promote the game over there.
Over here, you mean.
Uh... yeah.
Anyway.



LEX LUTHOR'S SOLVE MY MAZE

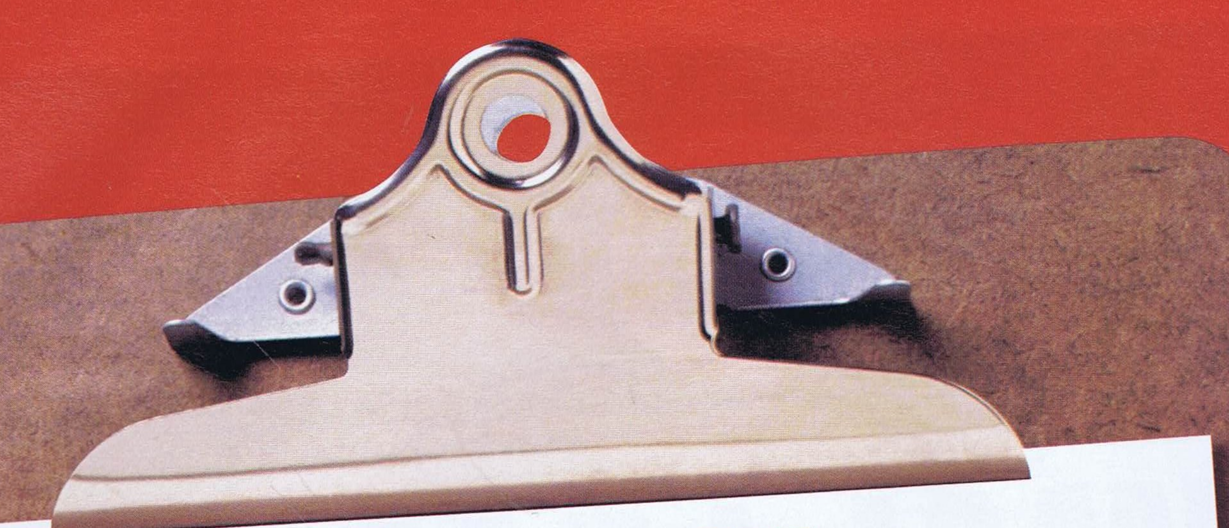


WIN A MEMORY CARD!

Send your solutions to:

Solve my Maze, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW
OR EMAIL: ngc@futurenet.co.uk

Last month's winner: Carl Sorton, Manchester





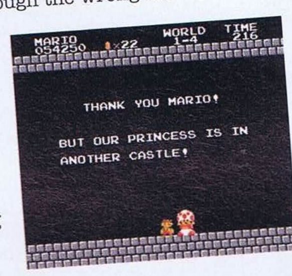
THE EVOLUTION OF... TOAD

Lurking around during all Mario's greatest moments, the Forrest Gump of Nintendo waits for a game of his own.

1 SUPER MARIO BROS

Appearance Tubby bearer of bad news. Wearing a nappy and waistcoat, Toad thanks Mario for wasting his time battling through the wrong castle.

Special move Despite having no legs, only feet, Toad finishes every Bowser castle long before Mario.



2 SUPER MARIO BROS 3

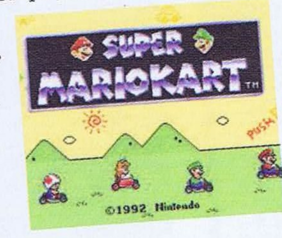
Appearance Toad now sports an actual nose and what looks suspiciously like hair under his mushroom-head 'hat'. Toad's prominent position in the most popular game, offering Mario a never-ending bounty of tips and prezzies, pretty much set him up for life.

Special move Dispenser of goodies and a master of simple card-magic.

3 SUPER MARIO KART

Appearance Established a reputation as the character of choice for people who were rubbish at driving. Sticks to the road like fungus sticks to a toenail.

Special move Drops poison 'shrooms that shrink other drivers when they run over them. But at what terrible cost? Biologically speaking, those are Toad's children.



4 WARIO'S WOODS

Appearance A leading role for the fungus man. Toad scampers inside a hollow tree, rearranging colourful blocks in typical puzzle game style. These days it's in-flight entertainment on Virgin Atlantic.

Special move A smug sense of impending power.



5 SUPER MARIO RPG

Appearance Wig-wearing Toadofsky, resident composer of Tadpole Pond. Among his greatest works are Mole Mountain Blues and the 18-part epic Frogfucious's Suite.

Special move Uncanny musical talent. Is there nothing that sweet, sweet mushrooms can't do?



6 MARIO GOLF

Appearance Denied the opportunity to play, Toad becomes a course official, stealing balls that go out of bounds and selling them to pay for tennis lessons.

Special move Pocketing golf balls from under Mario's nose while waving a large red flag. Typically brazen Toad.





7 MARIO TENNIS

Appearance: Toad reprises his Mario Kart role as the all-rounder of choice for people without much playing ability. Cries a lot too – a glimpse of things to come in Luigi's Mansion.

Special move: A quite remarkable physics-defying somersault.

8 PAPER MARIO

Appearance: Hungry for yet more exposure, Toad releases a headful of spores into the N64 RPG. They blossom into an entire Toad Town, filled with Toad clones. A bit like the Midwich Cuckoos.

Special move: Ubiquity. His agent pressed for the game to be renamed Toad's Paper Mario: Starring Toad.

9 SMASH BROS MELEE

Appearance: Embarrassed by the Toad Town incident, Nintendo subjected him to a humbling stint of being used as a shield against punches, kicks and bullets.

Special move: Absorbing punishment before being stuffed up Peach's skirt.



NGC TOP10

INAPPROPRIATE NINTENDO SPIN-OFFS

That we've made up.

1. **Link's Spray** Like wearing tights? Enjoy the company of fairies? Then get this! Body spray for borderline blokes...
2. **Mario's Magic Dutch Dust Bags** In shops now! Metal Mario, Winged Mario – be them all in one loooong night.
3. **Turok's Freshly Flayed Skin Suits** K-Mart exclusive! It ain't soggy and it ain't see-through. A great party gown.
4. **Joanna Dark Beard Cream** Ugly? Hairy moles? Got a beard like Matthew Kelly? Get clean! Get Darked!
5. **Joanna Dark Lady Shave** Petrol-driven leg-hair removing robot with free nitros for those tricky parts.
6. **Bowser's Prawn Vindaloo Mix** The perfect topping for any evening meal – may induce some vomiting and fire.
7. **Yoshi's Fake Dinosaur Turd** It's the most realistic poo ever made! Touch it – it even feels a bit squishy!*
8. **Princess Peach's Sticky Buns** X-rated cookery video – learn how to 'bake' 'cakes' and 'base' those 'puddings'.
9. **Nukem's Maim and Simple** Controversial three-part handbook. Part 1: How to butcher your entire town.
10. **Banjo's Sister-Lovin' Beer** West Virginia original! Sweet-talk your sis with this confidence-inducing brew.

* Manufacturer's note: consumers are advised that Yoshi's Fake Dinosaur Turd is, in fact, real dog faeces produced using genetically engineered Alsatians at our plant just outside Cleethorpes.



Your guide to the Gamecube planet's most exotic games.

ANIMAL LEADER



FACTS FOR THE TRAVELLER

GETTING THERE European Union residents contact CA Games on 0141 334 3901
CURRENCY ¥6,800 (approx £35)
LANGUAGE Japanese
ELECTRICITY Japanese Gamecubes (100V; 50Hz) only
POPULATION A growth of 102,789 copies of 1st May 2002
HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT Nintendo
DEVELOPMENT Nintendo
HEALTH RISKS Your sanity

Are you fit enough to survive one of gaming's strangest journeys to date?

HISTORY

Despite its blend of predatory aggression and uninhibited sexual congress, the world of *Doubutsu Banchou* was destined never to be experienced by N64-era backpackers. But with the arrival of more powerful hardware, Nintendo's horizons have opened up and this mythical island can now be discovered by more persistent travellers willing to pay hard cash to independent sources.



Fig a

EVENTS

Animal Leader (or *Doubutsu Banchou* in the native tongue) is one of the most inhospitable places on the gaming planet. For starters, it's entirely square: when wounded, animals drop square blood; when crossing water, ripples left in water are square **(Fig a)**, and so on. Subsequently, your first days in the region should be centred around concentrating on your primal instincts. Fight, flight and fornication **(Fig b)** are your only hope of survival. Local customs? There are none. However, if the traveller is successful at adapting to their new surroundings, they will go on a personal journey that will see them evolve many times over – as many as a hundred, in fact. Once you're past the 100 mark, you can officially embark on a new challenge: to take on – and maybe even replace – the Animal Leader himself. It is this that will likely form the focal point of your entire trip.

TRAVEL TIP *Chatting to the locals is strongly discouraged, and negotiation and diplomacy are about as welcome as a fart in a sleeping bag. Brute force is the only language the indigenous lifeforms understand.*



Fig b

ATTRACTIONS

From the claustrophobic forests of Erubo to the languid beauty of Irokoi Beach, the successful traveller will find a large number of highlights to enhance their journey of discovery:

• In a word: ladies. For the male there's plenty of local talent to go around. It's even been known for particularly prized males to mate with up to 30 members of the opposite sex at one time. If you're lucky, you may find yourself with as many as 20 children – a good job when you consider that, after mating, you die and find yourself reincarnated as one of your offspring.

• The island offers many opportunities to relax and skinny-dip in the fresh-water pools. Though don't get too comfortable – travellers should always remain vigilant in case predators sneak up unexpectedly.

CULTURE

The world of *Animal Leader* offers a perfect example of Darwinian theory in action. If the island had dictionaries then the word 'manners' would have a picture of an inhabitant belching after a particularly large meal. Civilised behaviour is rare, instinctive action and reaction common. Here's two examples:

• Ripping limbs off rivals is essential if you are to ascend the pecking order. Digesting the component parts of different animals will change your own DNA accordingly **(Fig c)**.

• Defecation in public spaces is not frowned upon. Indeed, it is considered as part of the natural cycle of existence, giving life-blood to the land and clearing the body of any impurities.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

ERUBO BOSS Find this Koteki leader **(Fig d)** and further exploration can be



Fig c

made – usually, on killing one of these bosses, you are awarded a new ability (in this particular case, a key). Don't worry – murder isn't frowned upon here! The Erubo Boss commands two silver Marakasu foot soldiers and caution must be exercised if victory is to be achieved. Gaming Planet advises that you chew on the two pesky henchmen until they keel over and die.

HEALTH SPRING Heart containers can often be found in the strangest of places. Search all pools to make sure vital objects and energy boosters are not overlooked **(Fig e)**.

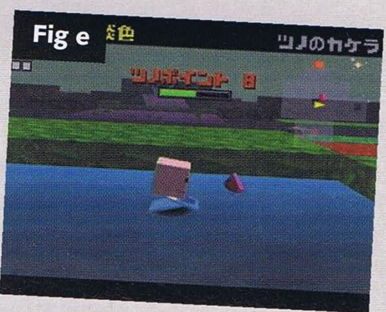
ACTIVITIES

• Teething is a vital part of growing up. Get a single incisor and chewing enemies becomes all the more easy. Become an adept Animal Leader and you may also grow horns.

• After hours of fighting and frolicking, sleep will become very welcome. Blowing bubbles is a charming way to end the day.

• Wrestling with the other animal inhabitants is a sure sign that you are bedding into the flow of island life. But be warned – they will give as good as they get.





• Reach full maturity and you will ascend to heaven. There, you can examine the legacy of your activities at your leisure – in the form of the corpses of your rivals **(Fig f)**.



PHOTO ALBUM

Photographic evidence of *Animal Leader* life has traditionally been hard to come by, but here are a few snaps we managed to sneak through customs:



1. Hentai. Literally 'perversion' in Japanese. The top left boxes represent the mutations you can go through during your travels.



2. Each mutation is represented by a set of statistics. From the top, they are: Health; Attack; Defence; Dash; Jump; Tackle; and Back.



3. Your present passport photo is depicted here. Over the course of the game you can become a pig, a bear and even a chicken.

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FASHION (CAPS WITH 'M' ON)
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TRAVEL
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Get Burned Alive by Bowser Go
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Updated: 06:17 a.m. EDT (1017 GMT) -- 9 May 2002

(AP PHOTO)

Onlookers in London's Covent Garden can't believe their eyes as Waluigi explodes early Thursday.

Waluigi explodes in sick Nintendo marketing disaster

Little-known Nintendo character Waluigi has exploded after Nintendo turned one of their perspex cubes into a makeshift decompression chamber. The stunt, designed to promote the launch of the Gamecube, was "the next step in the evolution of the campaign" said a Nintendo spokesman, but was "never meant to end with the explosion of Waluigi into a number of pieces". However, the spokesman did confirm that they "chose Waluigi because if it went wrong, no one would notice he was gone".

FULL STORY >>

MNN Access: Princess Peach
- **Video: Joanna Dark firing bullets into a corpse**
- **Video: Conker going to toilet**

ON MNN TVMNN — Programme Schedule >>

Mushroom Morning with Wario
Don't get angry – get even! Morning TV like you've never seen before with the return of the Mushroom Kingdom's favourite talkshow! This week: destroying your enemy. **(7-10 a.m. ET)**

RUBBISH CHARACTER SOMEHOW FOOLS THE WORLD

We try to understand the phenomenon of Rayman and attempt to explain why it continues to sell by the absolute shedload despite the fact that Rayman is rubbish. Unfortunately we fail. **Full**

OTHER TOP NEWS
- Turok: "I ain't got no mincing run" | Video
- Link on Celda rampage – latest from the front line
- *Mickey Speedway USA* is back! We mourn its return
- Luigi: "I'm better than my brother, aren't I? Er, aren't I?"
- Gosen is "24-hour games robot from Planet Gamecube"
- Ganon showcases Beethoven's fifth on Casio keyboard
- Yamauchi quits, keels over, comes back to life... again
- 'Mature' video games in the limelight – whatever that means

BUSINESS @ MNNmoney
- Mario's forecast: "It'll be up and down... and up... and down"
- Mushroom Kingdom currency alert: no one cares